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Avery Brundage, Pan-American Games, and Entrenchment of the Olympic Movement in Latin America

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Graduate Program in Kinesiology
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy
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Avery Brundage, the Pan-American Games,
and Entrenchment of the Olympic Movement in Latin America

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Doiara Silva dos Santos

Graduate Program in Kinesiology

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

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London, Ontario, Canada

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Abstract

To become firmly established, the Pan-American Games depended on the efforts of particular individuals. With Avery Brundage's attention to the Pan-American Games as the center of this analysis, this study documented the main events leading up to the inauguration of the Pan-American Games as well as their development and significance to Latin American countries in the mid-twentieth century. The research material was mainly drawn from primary sources, most importantly, those found in the Avery Brundage Collection at Western University. The study demonstrated that Brundage saw in the Pan-American Games not only a challenge, but an opportunity to promote the Modern Olympic Movement's rules and ideals throughout Latin America. A crucial finding from this investigation is how Brundage articulated the foundation of the Pan-American Games by clouding his actions and attitudes from imperialist connotations. He skillfully managed to build a trustful and solid networking with Latin American sport leaders, agreeing with the idea of creating a new and autonomous institution, the Pan-American Sports Organization (PASO). However, gradually, Brundage put forward the interests of the IOC, or to be more accurate, his view of sports, the Olympic Movement, and its purposes. In sum, two arguments related to the purpose and function of the Pan-American Games in its formative years stood out from data analysis: the diplomatic role of the Games towards enhancing Inter-American relationships; and the idealistic view later implicated in the event aimed at fostering the 'high ideals' of the Modern Olympic Movement.

Keywords: Pan-American Games. Latin America. Olympic Movement.

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List of Abbreviations

ABC – Avery Brundage Collection

A.A.U – Amateur Athletic Union

A.O.A – American Olympic Association

CADCOA - *Confederación Argentina de Deportes* and *Comité Olímpico Argentino*

IOC – International Olympic Committee

NOC – National Olympic Committee

ODEPA - Organización Deportiva Panamericana

PASO – Pan-American Sport Organization

USOC – United States Olympic Committee

U.S. – United States

WWII – World War II

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Making the Modern Olympic Movement global was Pierre de Coubertin's original idea. However, it proved to be a difficult challenge for the International Olympic Committee (IOC) during the early years of its history. Despite the technological advances in transportation and communication of the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, IOC global aspirations were constrained by the still limited geographic basis of international sports at that time.

Despite major obstacles, the IOC, in its over 100 year history, has sustained steady growth in terms of member countries, accumulated financial resources, number of athletes participating in the Games, and global recognition underscored, in part, by television audiences worldwide. The Games' survival to World War I was a sign of reasonable stability within the Movement in spite of the tumultuous atmosphere that enveloped much of the world. As constraints gradually diminished after World War I, the IOC intensified the process of developing strategies to expand the Movement beyond Europe and North America. However, the formation of sport organizations, especially National Olympic Committees (NOCs) in Asian, African, and Latin American countries was slow to occur. With respect to Latin America it was not until the 1920s and beyond that such Committees were organized.

Although some Latin American countries could rightfully point at earlier brushes with matters Olympic, it was not until a 1922 tour of the region by Henri Baillet-Latour, Coubertin's soon-to-be successor as IOC President, that so-called Olympism rose in the

awareness of sport leaders. Count Henri Baillet-Latour - then IOC vice-president - undertook the tour to promote the establishment of National Olympic Committees, Sport Federations, and the holding of regional competitions, modeled after the Olympic Games.

Baillet-Latour's presence on the IOC coincided with one of the first instances of regional games celebrated under the IOC patronage, those organized in Rio de Janeiro in 1922. Though the IOC vice-president was critical of Rio's organizational effort, he realized that Latin America could provide a fertile field for gaining new adherents to the global Olympic cause.¹

Following Rio's regional sport festival in 1922, Mexico hosted Central American Games in 1926 (also with IOC patronage). In the 1920s there were also intense debates at consecutive IOC sessions for hosting "All-African Games." But, it would take years until further and consistent action (rather than isolated events) could be effectively put in place to consolidate the phenomenon of regional Games.

Following World War II, the number of initiatives for hosting continental Games increased. For instance, plans for holding Asian Games were introduced at the 43th IOC Session in London in 1948.² Many regional multi-sport events have since been founded and modeled after the Olympics, each with IOC patronage. Thus, in order to make the Olympic Movement global/universal, the IOC endorsed regional and continental

¹ When referring to Latin America in this study, I am focusing on the area from the southern border of the United States of America to the southern tip of South America, including the Caribbean. Such definition is based on religious, cultural and linguistic references that arose from the geopolitics of the nineteenth century. As for South America, in particular, I am referring to independent countries that occupy the southern portion of the American continent landmass: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela. Hereafter, I refer to one or another depending on the emphasis that the context requires.

² Although the Far Eastern Games are considered their precursors, the Asian Games were formally inaugurated in 1951. The Pan-American Games and the Asian Games are the two oldest continental Games patronized by the IOC.

competitions.

Though recognizably important to the expansion and consolidation of the Olympic Movement, academic assessments of patron relationships between the IOC and regional, continental and intercontinental sport competitions and organizations are limited. This study is motivated by the lack of academic work on the history of continental Games, specifically those concerning Latin America. Thus, historical aspects of the establishment and development of the Pan-American Games and their implications for Latin America form the basis of this proposed work. My interest in Latin America is related to my country of origin, Brazil, where my academic background in Physical Education was formed. As a Master's student at the Federal University of *Espírito Santo* from 2009 to 2011, I concentrated my research interest in the Modern Olympic Movement and its Games. While being exposed to the history of international sport movements, especially following the beginning of my doctorate program at Western University in 2012, I became aware of the dearth of historical analyses linking Latin America and the Olympic movement. My studies at Western University provided me with the chance to observe that even in the specific area of historical and sociocultural studies in Physical Education in Brazil, for example, there is little knowledge of key factors and figures related to the development of the Olympic Movement in Latin America.

Over the course of time, Latin America's attention to the Modern Olympic Movement has advanced from merely participating to hosting different types of Olympic events. The Summer Olympics of Mexico 1968, the forthcoming Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro 2016, and the Youth Olympic Games in Buenos Aires 2018 are all major

events that have prompted the interest of sport historians, sociologists, and anthropologists concerned with political, economic and social aspects involved in these kind of endeavors. Investigating historical events that have influenced the configuration of the relationship between Latin America, the Modern Olympic Movement, and its Games, is crucial for understanding how they are perceived, and scrutinized within the contemporary sporting culture of the region.

Argentine scholar Cesar Torres³ found evidence suggesting that regional games were proposed in Latin America as early as 1916, but it was in the late 1930s that such Games became a certainty. Following the initial enthusiasm for inaugurating Pan-American Games in the 1930s and 1940s, the idea finally materialized in 1951. Since then, the Pan-American Games have been consistently celebrated quadrennially, always one year prior to the Olympic Games. The Pan-American Games, over time, have experienced gradual increases in participation and competitive standards. But, to become firmly established, the Pan-American Games depended on the efforts of particular individuals who persistently moved forward an agenda to secure the existence of the competition, an agenda that was permeated by political, financial and ideological factors, which will be fully explained later. The American sport administrator Avery Brundage was one such individual. It was no coincidence that he presided over the organization of the Pan-American Games from 1940 (when the conceptual phenomenon was officially formed) to 1955. In fact, the available literature about the history of the Pan-American Games substantiates that Brundage played a decisive role in the founding of the Pan-American Games (this point is covered in more detail

³ Cesar R. Torres, *Jogos Olímpicos Latino-Americanos: Rio de Janeiro 1922* (Manaus: Confederação Brasileira de Atletismo, 2012), pp. 1-147.

throughout this dissertation).

Statement of Purpose

With Brundage's attention to the Pan-American Games as the center of this analysis, I examined a history of these Games' early years, with an underlying interest towards discussing their implications in the consolidation of the Olympic Movement in Latin American countries. This study endeavored to substantiate that the Pan-American Games were a catalyst in increasing Latin American countries' knowledge and adherence to the Olympic Movement and its values, particularly in the event's early years, an era well before television became a popular media device for the general public in that region of the world. The study, therefore, addresses the following questions: How did Brundage influence the shaping of the foundation of the Pan-American Games? How did his view of sport and the Olympic Movement reflect and shape the Pan-American Games? Finally, what were the implications of the Pan-American Games for Latin American countries' connection to the broader Olympic Movement?

Contribution to the Body of Knowledge

As previously mentioned, Pierre de Coubertin had long been eager to promote Olympism and build a world-wide event, far beyond the perspective of Europe alone. The establishment of regional Games soon became one of the strategies to expand the

Olympic Movement. Coubertin was adamant that these games would be always under the IOC's direct control, as supplements to the Olympic Games.

In the 1950s, the Pan-American Games became one of the biggest continental multi-sports events in the world, as well as a formal constituent dimension of the International Olympic Movement. The event is organized by the Pan-American Sports Organization (PASO), whose actions and decisions, according to IOC governance structure, must abide by the Olympic Charter. Despite the steady growth and organization of the Pan-American Games, its history and implications for the broad Olympic Movement remain largely ignored within the academic sport literature. Thus, I here argue that critical assessments of patronizing relationships between the IOC and continental, intercontinental and/ or regional sport organizations and Games can contribute to a better understanding of such sport events relative to the challenges and goals within the broader Olympic Movement.

In general, scholars have investigated isolated events related to the history of the Pan-American Games. Mostly, accounts of the Pan-American Games concentrate on the systematic compilation of competition results, sport by sport, for each series of Games. A minority of studies highlighted Brundage's involvement in the first attempts to found Pan-American Games, but little is known about his second presidential term in the Pan-American Organization or about the aftermaths of the event. Therefore, while documenting the early years of the Pan-American Games, their development and significance in the mid-twentieth century, together with the contemporary implications for Latin America within the Olympic Movement, this study adds to the body of knowledge on the career of the controversial sports administrator, Avery Brundage.

In this study, the contextualization of the political configuration that enveloped Latin American countries in the 1950s and 1960s will form a comprehensive overview of the sport scenario in that region, thus contributing to the body of knowledge of Latin America sport history. Such history, it might be noted, has been only sparingly examined in international sport history circles. As pointed out by the Brazilian scholar, Lamartine DaCosta, only a few authors from Latin America have successfully overcome the barrier of the English language as required by international journals and books.⁴ In a recent publication, Douglas Booth⁵ confirmed the paucity of English-language journal articles and monographs about Latin America's sport history. Booth's reflections about this matter add that, as individuals, sport historians are connected to specific contexts and nationalities, framed by affective/emotional conditions, interested in narrower subjects related to those conditions and, thus, not necessarily attentive to every national or regional history.⁶ By analyzing the implications of the Pan-American Games for Latin American countries' acquaintanceship with the Olympic Movement, this study also contributes to the debate that Latin America's sport history "deserves a wider audience in the English language as well as thoughtful reflection on the complex cultures of this vast continent."⁷

⁴ Lamartine DaCosta, "J.A. Mangan: Innovating Down South American Way," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 20 (2003): 130-135.

⁵ Douglas Booth, "Sport History in Brazil: Cementing Local Foundations, Strengthening a Subdiscipline," *Journal of Sport History* 40 (2013): 371-375.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ J.A. Mangan, Prologue to *Sport in Latin America: past and present*, edited by J. A. Mangan and Lamartine P. DaCosta (New York: Routledge, 2001), Kindle edition.

Methodology

This study is presented in the format of a historical narrative. In this kind of work, based, particularly, on the empirical evidence at hand, the researcher seeks to provide a narrative about a specific topic without applying theory as an analytical tool. However, it is important to note that although such narrative is not the product of a theory nor does it seek to develop one, the analyses of data offers potential opportunities to discourse critically on theoretical concepts and ideas related to the topic. Whereas one may suggest that interpreting data is in itself a theorization, I argue that theorizing implies reliance on a previously established set of statements, models, or principles which underscore, guide, or assist the comprehension or judgment of phenomena. This study is not designed to engage in such a course of reasoning.

Any historical work demands interpretation and understanding of historical events, documents and processes.⁸ These key words - interpretation and understanding - remind us that the exercise involved in the writing of history is one where the researcher strives for a credible account of history while bounded by his/her subjectivity.

To a large extent, the availability and reliability of the sources influence the quality of a historical narrative. Of equal importance is the contextualization of the sources within their own time. The research material for this study is mainly drawn from primary sources, most importantly, those found in the Avery Brundage Collection (ABC) at Western University. Avery Brundage indelibly contributed to the founding and development of the Pan-American Games. Archival sources in this collection provided

⁸ Martha Howell and Walter Prevenier, *From reliable sources: an introduction to historical methods* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001).

fundamental information about the composition and acts of PASO, an organization which Brundage served as president for its first fifteen years of history.

The Avery Brundage Collection is a vast accumulation of historical records of important empirical value to this study.⁹ The ABC comprise correspondence, minutes, reports, photographs, clippings, scrapbooks, certificates, and publications. It includes extensive files on the International Olympic Committee; National Olympic Committees; sports federations and organizations; the Amateur Athletic Union; U.S. Olympic Association and Committee; Olympic Games and regional games.

In this study, the "evidence value" of Brundage's archives is suitable to the research purpose, though not intended to be absolute. In fact, in the writing of history the difficult task of establishing "evidentiary satisfaction" collides with quantitative and qualitative issues, such as those raised by Martha Howell and Walter Prevenier: "At what point do historians think they have enough evidence to support their arguments?" or when are interpretations "secure enough?"¹⁰ Though one can hardly answer such questions in the absolute, the degree of plausibility of the sources may be analyzed through their potential to present data that relate to the research objective. The analysis of archives in the Avery Brundage Collection linked to the preparation, organization and holding of the first editions of the Pan-American Games is crucial to tracing the early developments of the festival.

Following Buenos Aires' inaugural competitions, the Pan-American Games were

⁹ As well as other institutions, the University of Illinois Archives and Western University have made a special effort to preserve collections of major research significance. Archives from the ABC have been catalogued, organized, maintained, and made available for scholars from all over the world who have explored the materials found in the collection and published their research in peer-reviewed publications on a variety of topics.

¹⁰ Howell and Prevenier, *From reliable sources*, pp.79-80.

held again in Mexico in 1955. Brundage's term as president of the Pan-American Organization ended in that year. Thus, during his first three years as the IOC president, Brundage assumed two presidency positions simultaneously. For this reason, minutes of IOC sessions corresponding to the time he served both institutions are also included in the set of primary sources analyzed in this study.

As additional sources to investigate the specific scenario of Latin American countries' participation in both the Modern Olympic Movement and the Pan-American Games, I utilized the digitized materials available through the LA84 Foundation archives. In the LA84 archives, I found official publications of the IOC Executive Board, and back issues of *Olympic Review* relating to Latin America, the Pan-American Games and the Olympic Games. Latin American newspaper coverage of the early years of the Pan-American Games, published in Spanish and Portuguese, available in searchable online databases, were raised in the narrative. I have identified digital newspapers from several Latin American countries including Brazil, Uruguay, Peru, Venezuela, Argentina, Colombia, and Chile.¹¹

This research also relies on important secondary sources. Besides the examination of books, book chapters and journal articles to provide important context and insight, Avery Brundage's biography is of great importance to this study.¹² In *The Games Must Go On*, Allen Guttman used the archives of the Avery Brundage

¹¹ For example: Brazilian Digital Newspaper Library (includes newspapers, magazines, yearbooks and newsletters covering the 19th century to the present); Chilean Digital National Library (provide coverage of various titles from the 19th century to the present); Argentina's *Hemeroteca Digital Fray Francisco de Paula Castañeda* (provides searchable online access to digitized copies of newspapers from 1911–1979). There are also newspapers available at the Colombia Digital National Library; *Biblioteca Nacional Del Perú*; *Biblioteca Nacional de Uruguay - Colecciones Digitales*; and The Caribbean Newspaper Digital Library - <http://dloc.com/cndl>;

¹² Allen Guttman, *The Games Must Go On: Avery Brundage and the Olympic Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), pp. 9-317.

Collection (University of Illinois), minutes of IOC general sessions, minutes of IOC Executive Boards, and reports of several IOC subcommittees. The author also explored Brundage's unfinished autobiographical manuscript, and newspapers reports. Guttmann's work provides a valuable contribution to investigate the ideological component related to the founding of the Pan-American Games.

The analysis of the aforementioned materials was based on the assumption that understanding the past is an act of interpreting fragments. In a historical narrative the examiner attempts to bring together elements that constitute the events of the past in order to tell a story. In this process, pursuing objectivity does not imply a tentative reproduction of the past or its truth and complexities.¹³ While providing a particular account about a topic, conflicting evidence and interpretations remain possible.

Limitations

In general, when trying to make sense of data in a narrative historical work, the researcher faces a great challenge in putting the materials in perspective so they can be intelligible. Embracing English as a "second language" while carrying out this cognitive work can lead to limitations, not only in the interpretation of data but also in the development of a coherent text. Having said that, the influence of my "first language" (Portuguese) is one.

Another limitation is that other than the Avery Brundage Collection, there is limited availability of archives related to the history of the Pan-American Games. The

¹³ In this respect, I concur with the arguments proposed in Richard J. Evans, *In Defense of History* (London: Granta Books, 1997).

accessibility of other primary sources that exist in remote locations also represents a limitation to this study.¹⁴

This study largely relied on correspondence between Avery Brundage, members of the Pan-American Sports Committee, and IOC members. Documents from Spanish in the ABC were translated to English by the Chicago Association of Commerce upon Brundage's request. Some of the original letters written in Spanish were found in the ABC. However, the majority of the letters written originally in Spanish could only be accessed through their translated copies. I decided not to change the translations from Spanish, because that was how they were accessed by Avery Brundage. Although no major inaccuracies were found between the contents of the originals and the translated copies, English translations may render awkward grammar in some of the cited letters. A minority of documents found only in Spanish were translated to English by the researcher (in consultation with the supervisor of this study).

Considering the timeline and the availability of resources for the conclusion of this study, the vastness and diversity of Latin America pose two interrelated limitations to the research. One is geographical; it prevents additional collection of data from different countries. The second refers to interpretations concerning the significance of the Pan-American Games for Latin America as a whole (interpretative generalizations). I agree with the assumption that "whatever universal qualities may characterize modern sports - even of the 'professional' variety - considerations must be given to the specific context that shaped the form, meaning, and values of each society."¹⁵ In my opinion,

¹⁴ For example, there are two collections at the Olympic Studies Centre at the headquarters of the IOC in Lausanne that could provide extra insight to this analysis: "World, Continental and Intercontinental Games" and the "Regional and Sub regional Games."

¹⁵ Joseph Arberna, "Sport and the Study of Latin American Society: An Overview," in *Sport and Society in*

even in regional and continental Games, where countries share relative cultural similarities, the analysis of appropriations of athletic festivals by different societies is very complex. Still, this study is positioned to offer a perspective derived from the archives of one of the most important international figures in Olympic history, Avery Brundage. Though very well-known by European and North American scholars, Brundage is not even discretely examined in the recent field of Olympic studies in Latin America.

Delimitations

The general scope of this study encompasses the era from 1940 to 1972. More particularly, this study focuses on Brundage's second presidency term of PASO from 1948-1955. As a starting point, 1940 marks Brundage's first trip to South America for the inaugural Pan-American congress, which was meant to plan the hosting of the Pan-American Games. Brundage returned to the region to attend São Paulo's Pan American Games in 1963 and later, at the end of his controversial years as IOC president, Brundage attended the Pan-American Games in Cali, Colombia in 1971. His presence demonstrated how Brundage embraced a firm belief that the so called "third world was an opportunity and a challenge to the Modern Olympic Movement."¹⁶ Though "the Pan-American Games never rivaled the Olympic Games in his heart of hearts,"¹⁷ Brundage was one of the most active sport leaders in the foundation of the Pan-

Latin America: Diffusion, Dependency, and the Rise of Mass Culture, ed. Joseph Arbena (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), p.8.

¹⁶ Guttman, *The Games Must Go on*, p. 222.

¹⁷ Ibid.

American Games. In order to provide additional context relating to support of the argument that Brundage's work in the founding of the Pan American-Games was notably incisive towards the consolidation of the Modern Olympic Movement in Latin America, the study concludes with the last years of Avery Brundage's IOC presidency.

Organization of the Study

Chapters:

1. Introduction
2. The sporting and ideological character of Avery Brundage and the Pan-American mission.
3. Operational challenges and political inclinations: bringing the Pan-American Games to life
4. Putting the Pan-American Games on a Sound Footing
5. The Pan-American Games Reach Maturity
6. Summary, Conclusions and Future Research

The introductory chapter establishes the topic that the study will address, enunciating its interpretative approach while providing an overview of historical aspects linking Avery Brundage, regional games, the Olympic Movement and Latin America. Although separated into discrete sections through convention, the introduction will also provide a review of literature identifying and critically discussing previous works related to the topic while establishing evidence for the significance of the study.

Chapter Two examines Brundage's sporting character and dedication to "preserve the ideal" whenever the Olympic Movement and its Games were at risk. The chapter explores Brundage's distinct commitment to the inauguration of the Pan-American Games explaining how he envisioned hemispheric Games for the Americas as an "educational" tool to develop sports, sportsmanship, and advance the spirit of amateurism in the so-called "third world" countries.

Chapter Three looks at Brundage's second presidential term as president of PASO discussing his acts and attitudes from an administrative perspective. The chapter covers the inauguration of the Pan-American Games in 1951, emphasizing the relationship between Latin America and the Olympic Movement. It also demonstrates

how Brundage created a wide supporting network that ensured his subsequent election for the IOC. Chapter Four examines the Pan-American Games in Mexico 1955, and Chicago 1959, providing a detailed assessment of the most critical events in political, ideological and operational terms.

In chapter Five, I briefly discuss Brundage's attendance at the Pan-American Games of São, Paulo 1963, Winnipeg 1967, and Cali 1971, contextualizing his controversial battles as the president of the IOC and their implications for the Pan-American Games. The conclusions summarize and discuss how, in theory, regional games were part of the Olympic Movement, but, in practice, they often engendered destabilizing political conflict.

Literature Review

Sport historians have largely ignored regional games as a subject worthy of study. But, these competitions played an important role in the promotion of the Olympics worldwide, though, it is recognized, far less than the impact of television.

In its over 60 years of existence, there is no book-length academic account on the history of the Pan-American Games, written in English, Spanish, Portuguese or any other language. Although commemorative books, compilations of results, and statistical information about specific sports or athletes at single events can be found, serious historical narratives of the Pan-American Games, now approaching 75 years of age, are absent in international sporting literature.

For providing a general context to the initiatives and developments of regional

games, this study relies on two broad Olympic history monographs, namely those by John MacAloon,¹⁸ and Allen Guttman.¹⁹

Departing from the general, towards the specific, one encounters the works of Joseph Arbena, who studied the development of modern sports in Latin America; Frances Houghton, who investigated the participation of Argentine Patagonians at the 1904 Olympics; Richard V. McGehee, who investigated the origins of Olympism in Mexico through the inauguration of the Central American Games in 1926; Wolf Kraemer-Mandau, who analyzed the international Olympic Movement in Latin America in its early years; Marcia de Franceschi Neto-Wacker and Christian Wacker, who investigated historical aspects about the formation of the National Olympic Committees in South America; and Cesar Torres, who wrote about the expansion of the Olympic Movement in Latin America through the Argentinean efforts to host Pan-American Games in 1942. In general, Torres and Arbena have published more or less continually on the topic of Latin American sport history, whereas other authors published sporadically.

In order to address the historical aspects linking Latin America to the Olympic Movement and the Pan-American Games, this section first provides a brief overview of the development of sport in the region. Then, as the development of the Pan-American Games is directly related to the Olympic Movement, this study explores the Olympic diffusion in Latin America from the events that preceded the so called "Olympic Explosion" in the 1920s to the inauguration of regional Games in Rio de Janeiro in 1922

¹⁸ John J. MacAloon, *This Great Symbol: Pierre de Coubertin and the Origins of the Modern Olympic Games* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1984).

¹⁹ Allen Guttman, *The Olympics: a History of the Modern Games* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

and Mexico in 1926, each of which were well documented by Cesar Torres and Richard McGehee, respectively. In this study, I argue that these two events were important driving forces to the later inauguration of the Pan-American Games.

While no book-length project explores the history of the Pan-American Games and its association with the Olympic Movement in Latin America, two works documented their initial implementation. A Master's major paper, written by Mengjia Zhang and presented at Western University in 2011, examined the founding of the Pan-American Games in Latin America, examining in particular the role played by Avery Brundage in helping the Argentines to prepare for and stage the first Games. Zhang's paper concentrated on the Sport Congresses held towards organizing and preparing for Pan-American Games in the 1940s.²⁰

Avery Brundage's first steps to spread the Olympic Movement in Latin America resulted in the failed attempt to host Pan-American Games in Buenos Aires in 1942. Cesar Torres²¹ published a paper about this particular episode, concentrating his analysis on the efforts of Argentine sport leaders within the structure of international sport and the complex dynamics of the American-Argentine relationship.

Curtis Emery's dissertation entitled "The History of the Pan-American Games," defended at Louisiana State University in 1964, seemed to be, at first glance, an attempt to write about the history and development of the Pan-American Games in its early years.²² But, in his introduction the author indicates that his work was aimed to

²⁰ Mengjia Zhang, "Avery Brundage and the Founding of the Pan-American Games" (Master's Major Paper, Western University, 2011).

²¹ Cesar R. Torres, "The limits of Pan-Americanism: the case of the failed 1942 Pan-American Games," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28 (2011): 2547-2574.

²² Curtis Ray Emery, "The History of the Pan-American Games" (PhD diss., Louisiana State University, 1964).

gather the results of each competition from 1951 to 1963, in effect, little more than a statistical treatment.

Late twentieth century accounts about the Pan-American Games focused on specific aspects of singular problematics, such as environmental issues, security, urban management, athletic techniques and medical developments.²³ This study analyzes the historical development of the Pan-American Games, contextualizing their implications for Latin America within the Olympic Movement.

Sport and Sport History in Latin America

Within the general context of sport history in Latin America, a theme that usually surfaces in the literature is that Latin America was a "recipient region" of foreign cultural practices. The term references the process of global diffusion of modern sports that occurred at the same time as the constitution of colonial empires and world markets.²⁴ The foregoing discussions emphasize that the colonial process was primarily a mechanism of cultural influence conjointly with political and commercial dominance.²⁵

Within this context, cultural imperialism is a concept commonly employed by sport researchers to describe the diffusion of modern sports from Europe and the United

²³ See, for example: Yoshiaki Takei, "Techniques used by elite women gymnasts performing the handspring vault at the 1987 Pan-American Games," *International Journal of Sport Biomechanics* 6 (1990): 29-55; Jordi Segura et al., "International cooperation in analytical chemistry: experience of anti-doping control at the XI Pan-American Games," *Clinical Chemistry* 39 (1993): 836-845; Alberto de Oliveira, "Mega-events, Urban Management and Macroeconomic Policy: 2007 Pan-American Games in Rio de Janeiro," *Journal of Urban Planning and Development* 137 (2010): 184-192.

²⁴ See, for example: Mark Dyreson, "Imperial 'deep play': reading sport and visions of the five empires of the 'New World', 1919-1941," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28 (2011): 2421-2447; Joseph L. Arben, "Nationalism and sport in Latin America, 1850-1990: the paradox of promoting and performing 'European' sports," *The International Journal of The History of Sport* 12 (1995): 220-238.

²⁵ See J. A. Mangan, "The Early Evolution of Modern Sport in Latin America: A Mainly English Middle-Class Inspiration?," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 18 (2001): 9-42.

States to the "rest of the world" and, under these terms, also the case of the Modern Olympic Games. In his work, the scholar Allen Guttman prudently deliberates on the concept of "cultural imperialism" by arguing that colonials in Africa, Asia and Latin America were not the only peoples induced to abandon some of their traditional forms of physical culture. In the industrialized core as well as in the agrarian periphery, in Europe as well as in the United States of America, modern sports have displaced traditional physical cultures. Thus, while assuming that a nation that exercises political or economic power most often, although not always, exercises cultural power, Guttman argued that all cultures develop as a result of interactions.²⁶ I agree that while cultural imperialism played a role in the diffusion of the Olympic Movement worldwide, the idea of domination alone does not explain everything. Any examiner of sport history in Latin America must consider the complexities of such a process.

The early diffusion of modern sport in Latin America, similar to many other parts of the world, underscored England as the center and source of modern sport. Mangan's assessment of the initial development of sports in Latin America demonstrated that, in most cases, modern sports entered Latin American countries through a capital or major port city via middle to upper class foreigners or locals returning from travels to Europe or the United States.

The sporting practices penetrating Latin America in the 1800s displayed the characteristics of the modern societies from which they came: greater structure and discipline, standardized rules across larger areas, bureaucratization, rationalization of training methods, etc. In general, European gymnastic models preceded modern sports and were soon adopted by Latin American clubs, school systems, and militaries.

²⁶ Guttman, *Games and Empires*, pp.150-173.

From the vantage point of analysis of primary sources, the collection of essays edited by Mangan and DaCosta²⁷ pointed out that British - mainly English - entrepreneurs and traders brought sport to Latin American countries for their own purposes of recreation and competition, without overt imperialist intentions. Mangan and DaCosta argue that modern sports were willingly taken up by many Latin Americans "without any European coercion and not a great deal of persuasion."²⁸ The authors explain:

As a generalization, it may be true that Europeans in their imperial strategies, tactics, and actions persistently attempted to undermine the modes of production, social institutions, cultural patterns, and value systems of indigenous peoples. What is striking, fascinating and different in the case of Latin America is that the English, the main progenitors of much of modern global sport, on their arrival in the nineteenth century certainly made no persistent effort either to undermine the indigenous play patterns or their values among the indigenous peoples. The Latin American communities placed the burden of making any necessary adjustments willingly on their own shoulders. European culture, including English Games, was seen as superior, desirable, commendable and to be assimilated. Of course, desirability and admiration varied in intensity from place to place.²⁹

By analyzing the beginning of the diffusion of Olympic ideals in Argentina, for example, Cesar Torres argues that progress towards modernization in sport was not inevitable. Torres demonstrated the conflicting ideas about modern sport and the Olympics in Argentina, pointing out that the dynamics in a society can inhibit or advance the progress of modern sport.³⁰ But, in general, Latin Americans embraced "imported" practices as a means of conforming to the European model of society. Meanwhile,

²⁷ J. A. Mangan and LaMartine P. DaCosta, eds., *Sport in Latin American Society: Past and Present* (New York: Routledge, 2001), Kindle edition.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Cesar R. Torres, "Tribulations and Achievements: The Early History of Olympism in Argentina," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 18 (2001): 59-92.

previous elements of Latin America physical culture were modified, reduced or even eliminated.

Arguably, the establishment of sport as an essential practice of a modern State was one of the driving forces of the internationalization of sport. As a social practice, competitive sports represented a strain of the physical culture that could promote moral virtues and self-discipline. Latin American scholars from Brazil, Argentina and Mexico concur that modern sports were imported to teach the behavior necessary to accelerate modernization in Latin American societies.³¹ In other words, by emulating "modern" cultural practices from Europe and the United States of America, Latin American elites aimed to achieve similar degrees of economic and social development.

The twentieth century research thrust of Latin America sport history is well represented in Joseph Arbena's contribution to the body of knowledge. The author published two works of annotated citations of books, articles, documents and other sources relating to the practice and study of sport in Latin America (in English, Spanish, and Portuguese).³² Arbena related to the reader that he began looking at the phenomenon of sport in Latin America "with belief that little was available on the subject in English and not much of an analytical or historical nature existed in any language."³³ But, to his surprise, Arbena learned that he had been wrong, especially on the second count.

Each of Arbena's works contains more than a thousand references, offering a

³¹ Joseph L. Arbena, "The Later Evolution of Modern Sport in Latin America: The North American Influence," *International Journal of the History of Sport*, 18 (2001): 43-58.

³² See Joseph Arbena, *An annotated Bibliography of Latin American Sport – Pre-conquest to the present* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1989), pp. xiii-324. See also Joseph Arbena, *An annotated Bibliography of Latin American Sport, 1988-1998* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998), pp. xi-244.

³³ Arbena, *An annotated Bibliography of Latin American Sport*, p. 9.

significant overview of the general topic of sport in Latin America. Based on Arbena's annotations it was possible to identify that, within the general body of Latin American sport history, soccer was the privileged theme of scholarly work in the twentieth century. But, Arbena's annotations also demonstrated that despite soccer's predominance in the twentieth century Latin America sport literature, the Olympic Movement and its Olympic Games also received impressive attention.³⁴ A vast academic literature on the Mexico 1968 Olympics existed. Then, too, Arbena identified bibliographical entries related to the activities of National Olympic Committees in Latin American countries. Also molded in the Olympic genre were Olympians' biographies and academic works permeated with the relationship between Olympic values, nationalism, and physical education. Among the works identified by Arbena, the Pan-American Games appeared only as part of edited works of competition results, thus, lacking historical contextualization and interpretation.

The following section aims to contextualize the initial connection between Latin Americans and the Olympic Movement.

Latin America and the Olympic Movement: Early Encounters

In general, Latin American sport history is not an imbedded persistent theme of investigation in international academic sport history research. The literature relevant to Latin American involvement in the Olympic Games is far from abundant. It focuses on the specifics of particular events regarding Latin America and the Olympic Movement,

³⁴ If one considers a cultural definition of Latin America that encompasses Mexico (the host city of the 1968 Olympic Games), a vast literature is found among Arbena's annotations. While geographically located in North America, in 1968 Mexico displayed many of the social features that permeated most South American nations: a developing economy, urgent social needs in terms of education, transportation and health.

especially exploring the first 50 years of its history (from the 1880s to the 1940s). Thus, the challenge of writing a broad history of Latin American involvement in the Olympic Movement remains unmet.

At the time of the emergence of the modern Olympic idea in 1894, most Latin American countries had only recently become independent.³⁵ Still, representative athletes from that region of the world "may" have competed in early editions of the modern Olympic Games.³⁶ However, Kramer-Mandeu found that Latin America's first Olympians could hardly be regarded as "Latin American." He described those athletes as "newcomers" who immigrated one or two generations before to the "new world" and for whom modern sport was hardly something foreign because of their European education background.

Latin American officials, in turn, were integrated into the Olympic Movement early in the IOC's history. As a self-recruiting body, the IOC viewed its members as diplomatic representatives of the Olympic Movement in their home countries, rather than as representatives of their nations. In general, the first Latin American IOC members were aristocrats who lived in Europe and had little or no contact with sport in their countries of origin. Kramer-Mandeu, investigating the first Latin American IOC members and their backgrounds, found that most of the Latin American IOC officials were from upper classes (factory owners, Ministers, Ambassadors, bank directors, architects, etc.), which fits in the general trend of the entire conception of the Olympic Movement, at least

³⁵ Brazil became an independent country in 1822; Uruguay was recognized as an independent State in 1828; in 1830 Colombia became an independent country; In that same year Venezuela and Ecuador became independent republics; Mexico became a federal republic in 1867.

³⁶ See Wolf Kraemer-Mandeu, "National and International Olympic Movements in Latin America," In *Contemporary Studies in the National Olympic Games Movement*, edited by Roland Naul (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1997), 26-33.

under Baron Pierre de Coubertin and each of his handpicked IOC members.

It seems reasonable to argue that the motivation harboured by some of the first Latin American officials committed to the Olympic Movement was inflected towards diplomatic reasons, but they were not actively interested in developing the Olympic Movement in their home countries, at least not as a priority. Some facts can support the argument that, in general, there was no concern about fomenting the development of the Olympic Movement in the officials' respective countries. For example, Argentine pedagogue José Benjamin Zubiaur was one of the founding members of the modern Olympics. Despite Zubiaur's early involvement with the IOC, he was not a very active member. Zubiaur devoted a lot of his time to the promotion of sport and physical education, but he never worked as diligently to promote Olympism. As no Argentine team or individual athlete competed in the first Games, it would seem that José Zubiaur did not exert much time and/or effort to promote the Olympic Movement in Argentina.³⁷ By 1921, following Zubiaur's dismissal in 1905, there were IOC members from Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay.

According to Chilean National Olympic Committee records, the diplomat and athlete Luis Subercaseaux was the first Latin American athlete to participate in the Olympic Games, those in Athens in 1896.³⁸ The Chilean Olympic Committee claims that Subercaseaux competed in the 100, 400, and 800 meters races in the athletics (Track and Field) program. But, no further details are given, and no mention record appears of

³⁷ Once Coubertin realized that Zubiaur was not valuable to his cause in South America, he dismissed Zubiaur from the IOC in 1905. Zubiaur had the distinction of being the first Latin American IOC member, but as a result of his inaction he was also the first member to ever be removed from that body. See Cesar R. Torres, "Mass Sport Through Education or Elite Olympic Sport? José Benjamín Zubiaur's Dilemma and Argentina's Olympic Sports Legacy," *OLYMPIKA: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 7 (1998): 61-88.

³⁸ Ernesto Goycolea Cortés, "Chile and Olympism," *Olympic Review*, no.171, January 1982, pp.35-43.

Subercaseaux's participation on credible lists of results.³⁹ Apart from Americans and Australians, the Chilean, if he was indeed present, would have been the only non-European athlete to compete in those inaugural Games. Following Subercaseaux's alleged participation, it was more than 40 years until Chile's National Olympic Committee was finally recognized by the IOC.

Argentine Eduardo Camet, a fencer, participated in the 1900 Paris Games.⁴⁰ On that occasion, the Olympics were held as part of the Paris Exposition World's Fair and, in the opinion of Olympic scholars, those Games did little to enhance the Modern Olympic Movement.⁴¹

The 1904 Olympics, in turn, occurred in conjunction with the Louisiana Purchase Exposition World's Fair in St Louis. The St Louis Games represent an interesting context for the analysis of Olympic diffusion in Latin America. In the greater sports exhibitions held during the event, the dichotomy between modern and non-modern practices emerged. Under the title of "Anthropology Days," competitions were organized by William J. McGee and James Sullivan, who were, at that time, leading figures in American anthropology and sports, respectively. In those events, "primitive," indeed "conquered" tribes, performed before the public. Susan Brownell edited a volume of interdisciplinary essays that assessed those events.⁴² The essays indicate that Natives who participated in the Fair's ethnic displays competed in sports events as a means of measuring the physical prowess of "savage" Natives compared with civilized men.

³⁹ See Bill Mallon and Ture Widland, *The 1896 Olympic Games: results for all competitors in all events, with commentary* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1998), pp. xvi-152.

⁴⁰ See Bill Mallon, *The 1900 Olympic Games Results for All Competitors in All Events, with Commentary* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1998), pp. ix-313.

⁴¹ Alfred Senn, *Power, Politics and the Olympic Games: A History of the Power Brokers, events, and controversies that shaped the Games* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1999), p.25.

⁴² Susan Brownell (Ed.). *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games - Sport, Race, and American Imperialism: Critical Studies in the History of Anthropology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008).

Based on that same context, Frances Houghton analyzed the participation of Argentine Patagonians (indigenous) during the St Louis 1904 Olympic program.⁴³ According to Houghton, the indigenous tribes competed alongside the "developed nations" in a few modern Olympic events and competed between themselves in what were called "traditional sports," such as bolo (a form of bowling) and mud fights.⁴⁴ Houghton's findings suggest that the participation of Argentine Patagonians were framed as an example of barbarism and underdevelopment.

In spite of the denial of government subsidy, Argentina was represented in the 1908 London Games by Henri Torromé.⁴⁵ The Official Report of the subsequent Games, those in Stockholm in 1912, indicated that countries without representatives on the International Olympic Committee were not to receive an official invitation. The report cited Brazil, Chile and South American nations, in general, as examples.⁴⁶ But Chile sent a team for the first time, after securing a late invitation.

Amidst the few initiatives of individual athletes and the recruitment of European-Latin Americans to IOC membership, tentative National Olympic Committees were created in Latin American countries. Chile's first attempt to create its NOC dates to 1912; Brazil's first attempt to establish its NOC occurred between 1913 and 1914. However, these first organizations did not function effectively.⁴⁷ Mostly, this was due to

⁴³ Besides the Argentine Patagonians, there were African Pygmies, Native American Indians and others from the "recently conquered Philippines." See Frances Houghton, "Latin America and the Olympic Ideal of Progress: An Athlete's Perspective," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 22 (2005): 158-176.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.162.

⁴⁵ Torres, *Tribulations and Achievements*, p. 69.

⁴⁶ Olympic Organizing Committee, *Official Report of the Games of the V Olympiad* (Stockholm: SOOC, 1913), p.23.

⁴⁷ For context on the emergence of the first Brazilian National Olympic Committee, see Marcia De Franceschi Neto-Wacker and Christian Wacker, "Rio goes Olympic," *Journal of Olympic History* 17 (2009): 6-20.

the fact that Latin American countries were only beginning to organize sport institutions (federations, confederations, etc.). Up to that time, only independent and unsystematic actions to promote sport in Latin America had occurred. Consequently, with no government funding or management, conflicts emerged about the legitimacy of such institutions, which prevented, in part, the successful development of National Olympic Committees.

World War I prevented the celebration of the 1916 Olympic Games in Berlin. The war brought the growth of the Olympic Movement to a standstill. Too old to fight, Coubertin, nevertheless, volunteered to serve and was assigned to the national propaganda service. For the duration of his service, Coubertin designated Baron Godefroy de Blonay, from Switzerland, to serve as interim president of the IOC. Assuming that the Games of Sixth Olympiad would not be celebrated, focus was on the next possible festival.

Pierre de Coubertin created the Latin American Olympic Propaganda Committee in 1917, prior to the Games' resumption. It seems clear that the Baron was worried about the future of the Olympics. If the Olympic Games were not only to survive the conflict but also to make the transition from an event of regional consequence to one of global proportions, international participation beyond Europe and a handful of other countries had to increase.⁴⁸

The Latin American Olympic Propaganda Committee was mainly composed of Ecuadorian Mr. Eduardo Dorn y de Alsua (president) and Salvadorian Mr. Pedro Jaime de Matheu (Secretary General). A pamphlet was widely distributed, with the title: *¿Que*

⁴⁸ Cesar R. Torres, "Spreading the Olympic Idea to Latin America: The IOC-YMCA partnership and the 1922 Latin American Games," *Journal of Olympic History* 16 (2008): 16-24.

es el Olympism? (What is Olympism?).⁴⁹ Although Coubertin judged the Latin America Propaganda Committee as "effective," Cesar Torres argued that Coubertin was mistaken;⁵⁰ there was no effective action from the Committee to spread the Olympic idea in Latin America.

The IOC, shortly after World War I, reunited. In 1919 and, while celebrating the 25th anniversary of the modern revival, Antwerp was confirmed as the site of the 1920 Olympic Games. National Olympic Committees had but one year to prepare. At that postwar point, life in Latin America had been not as disrupted as the case was in Europe and North America. Throughout the WWI period, people in Latin America continued to engage in modern sports. As urban centers developed, they were influenced by the region's integration into global markets and improving conditions of communication.

Until the 1920 Antwerp Games, only five Latin American countries sent representative athletes to the Olympics. Kramer-Mandeu's work showed that some of them were individuals who lived in Europe and competed on their own initiatives.⁵¹ Chile and Brazil were the first Latin American nations to send delegations to the Olympic Games.⁵²

⁴⁹ Pierre de Coubertin, Letter to the Members of the International Olympic Committee (January, 1919)," in *Olympism: Selected Writings*, ed. Norbert Müller (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 2000), 738.

⁵⁰ Torres, "Spreading the Olympic Idea to Latin America," p.21.

⁵¹ Cuban fencer Ramón Fonst (1883-1959) was an example. He was the son of a fencing trainer family, who taught the European school of fencing in Havana. Fonst was sent for school and fencing education in Paris and began his Olympic career at the second Olympic Games held in that city. See Kraemer-Mandeu, "National and International Olympic Movements in Latin America," pp. 26-33.

⁵² Chile sent a military delegation in 1912 (after a later invitation) and also in 1920. In 1920 Brazil's NOC had only a virtual existence, but a national team went to Antwerp. The Brazilian team was formed by the National Sports Confederation.

Olympic expansion in the 1920s: IOC-YMCA partnership

Ultimately, the Pan-American Games proposal and its realization can be attributed to external and internal forces evident in the 1920s and 1930s. The YMCA's international prominence following World War I and its subsequent influence in Latin America rank as one of the most important external forces.

In general, the period between 1920 and 1932 is commonly referred to as the "Golden Age" of the Olympic Games.⁵³ Guttman's historical account of the modern Olympics suggests that the 1920s were the period when the Olympic Games reached maturity.⁵⁴ Barbara Keys points out that in the 1920s "the IOC became an institution with a life of its own, no longer subject to the autocratic control of its founder."⁵⁵ It was during this period that Germany reentered the Games. Further, the Winter Olympics were inaugurated and, finally, the Games expanded to Latin America and Asia in an impressive manner. The partnership between the IOC and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) played a decisive role in this expansion.

While the IOC evolved in a familiar organizational pattern, challenges arose. In his work on the modern Games, Guttman cited the obstacles and discussions the IOC had to face, such as the recurring issue of which sports to include in the Olympic program, the amateur and professionalism tensions, conflicts with International Federations, and the emergence of alternative Games, such as the Inter-Allied Military Olympiad, the Workers' Olympics, and Women's World Games. These events, though

⁵³ Senn, *Power, Politics and the Olympic Games*, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁴ Allen Guttman, *The Olympics: a History of The Modern Games* (Urbana-Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992), p. 37.

⁵⁵ Barbara J. Keys, *Globalizing Sport: National Rivalry and International Community in the 1930s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 45-46.

short-lived, challenged the IOC by pressuring it to recognize the need to accommodate the growth of popular interest in sport.

The available literature relative to the IOC-YMCA partnership mainly evolves from access to the IOC archives and correspondence between IOC members and YMCA leaders around the world. The work of Dikaia Chatziefstathiou is one example.⁵⁶ She analyzed the diffusion of the Olympic Movement through regional Games in Asia and Africa, pointing out that Coubertin's Olympic Games were troubled by "rival" events as early as 1913, when the Far Eastern Games were launched by the YMCA. The idea of hosting Far Eastern Championships was closely linked to the longstanding efforts of missionaries of the YMCA to "Christianize" Asians, thereby diffusing the concept of "muscular Christianity." The American Elwood S. Brown, serving as President of the International Committee of the YMCA, commonly referred to the Far Eastern Championships as Far Eastern "Olympics."⁵⁷ Plans for hosting these sport events were systematically carried out. In 1911, Brown helped to create the Philippine Amateur Athletic Foundation (PAAF) as an initial attempt to bureaucratize modern sports in that region of the world. Later, in 1913, the Far Eastern Athletic Association (FEAA) was created to organize the first Far Eastern Championship Games. Sport competitions were held during the Manila carnival in February 1913 and, unofficially, those games were referred to as the "First Oriental Olympic Games." The official name of the event changed to Far Eastern Games a few years later and competitions were held biennially until 1927. After that, the Games were supposed to be held every four years, starting in

⁵⁶ Dikaia Chatziefstathiou, "The diffusion of Olympic sport through regional games: a comparison of pre- and post-second war contexts," International Olympic Committee, 2008, <http://doc.rero.ch/record/12567>. Accessed 23 June 2014.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

1930, but, the last edition of the competition occurred in 1934. Between 1913 and 1934 the Games rotated between the Philippines, China, and Japan. Sport competitions included athletics, swimming, tennis, basketball, football, and baseball. These series of Games are considered to be the precursors of the Asian Games, a continental competition that nowadays is endorsed by the IOC.

The YMCA aspirations and activities were not restricted to Asia. Concerned about the mass of allied troops lingering in postwar Europe, the U.S. military, assisted by the YMCA, organized Inter-allied Games. Staged in Paris in 1919, those Games became popularly known as "Military Olympics." After learning about preparations for what was publicized as a "Super Olympiad," Coubertin wrote to Brown. The Baron considered the YMCA Allied plans as threats to the re-establishment of post-World War I Olympic Games. Following the end of the War, Coubertin asked: "What on earth is a 'Super Olympiad'?"⁵⁸ Brown sought to soothe the IOC president. He proposed that the YMCA could become an executive force to the "Olympization" of new countries. Brown claimed that the two institutions (IOC and YMCA) could combine efforts in order to achieve their goals as they had similar interests. In mid-1919 Coubertin corresponded and met several times with Brown. Cesar Torres examined correspondence between Brown and Coubertin related to the proposed partnership.⁵⁹ Evidence shows that it was during the IOC session in August 1920 in Belgium, following the completion of the Antwerp Games, that Brown officially presented his partnership plan to the IOC. Emphasizing that the two institutions pursued similar goals, Brown reported that plans for hosting regional games were maturing. On that occasion, Brown proposed the realization of regional Games in

⁵⁸ Pierre de Coubertin, "Olympic Letter XIII," in *Olympism: Selected Writings*, ed. Norbert Müller (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 2000), 550.

⁵⁹ Torres, "Spreading the Olympic Idea to Latin America," pp. 16-24.

South America and requested the IOC's endorsement and patronage.

Brown's proposal was supported by influential IOC members such as Count Henri Baillet-Latour (Belgium) and William M. Sloane (USA). The latter advised Coubertin to write a "greeting letter" to the South American sport bodies, a letter that Brown might use to arouse interest in the project. During his trip to the region in the early 1920s, Brown met with numerous sport and government officials, including the presidents of Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay.⁶⁰ At that moment, the YMCA enjoyed both a visible and positive reputation in Latin America, with extensive facilities and cooperators in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico and Uruguay.⁶¹ In summary, the IOC members did not undertake to spread sport in Latin America operationally. One of the reasons was that the organization lacked the necessary financial assets. But, the IOC did lend its support to the efforts of the YMCA by granting recognition to regional Games. In turn, the YMCA benefitted from an improved image, not yet contaminated by the spectrum of commercialism.

Regional Games in Latin America: 1922 and 1926

Two regional sport events staged in Latin America in the 1920s received detailed attention in Latin America sport history literature: the 1922 Rio de Janeiro Latin American Games and the 1926 Central American Games.⁶² The examinations of each

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ There is limited research on the topic of sport, the YMCA, and South American countries. See Claudia Guedes, "The Work of the Young Men's Christian Association in the Promotion of Play and Athletics in Foreign Countries," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28 (2011): 2594-2608.

⁶² See Torres, "Spreading the Olympic Idea to Latin America," pp.16-24; and Richard V. McGehee, "The Origins of Olympism in Mexico: The Central American Games of 1926," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 10 (1993): 313-332.

relied on primary sources from the IOC archives in Lausanne, national libraries and local newspapers.

In the so-called Golden Age of the 1920s, national and international festivals rode the wave of greater popularity of sports in the early twentieth century. Soon, sport competitions grew into major celebrations, both national and international in scope. Not unusual, the words Olympic and Olympiad were used to promote them.

In 1919, the Brazilian government raised the question of a National Exhibition for the Independence centenary celebrations planned for September 1922.⁶³ A wide range of activities, including a series of sport competitions were envisioned. Initially, such competitions were to be national in scope. Given the descriptive term "Brazilian Olympic Games Championships," they were to be organized by a club from Rio de Janeiro under the supervision of the Brazilian Confederation of Sports.⁶⁴ They were supported by the YMCA.

Meanwhile, following the partnership agreement with the IOC, Elwood Brown visited Brazil. In Rio de Janeiro, by then Brazil's capital, he wrote to Coubertin proposing that Brazil extend invitations to its "Brazilian Olympic Games Championships" to include Peru, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay in order to make the sport competitions of the Independence celebrations broader in scope. In short, Brown suggested the internationalization of sport events within the centennial celebrations. The almost inoperative Brazilian Olympic Committee, created in 1914 and presided over by Baron Raúl do Rio Branco, Brazil's IOC member, endorsed this idea. The Confederation and the National Olympic Committee clashed over the control of sports and the former

⁶³ Cesar Torres, "The Latin American 'Olympic Explosion' of the 1920s: Causes and Consequences," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 23 (2006): 1092.

⁶⁴ In Portuguese "*Confederação Brasileira de Desportos*."

assumed the organization of the regional Games to occur in 1922. The preparation of the Games, the first project ever carried out under the IOC-YMCA partnership, were slow to materialize.

Jess Hopkins, physical education secretary of the South American Federation of YMCAs, corresponded with both Coubertin and Brown. By mid-May 1921, Hopkins recommended that the YMCA withdraw its support for recognition of the South American Games, because even if the Games eventually occurred, negative outcomes would harm the YMCA's reputation. Brown, apparently unconcerned by Hopkins' constant warnings about the situation in Brazil, reported to IOC Sessions that the South American Games were proceeding smoothly and even suggested that, given the possibility of Mexico's, Cuba's, and Puerto Rico's participation in the competitions, the Games should be renamed The Latin American Games. Torres has theorized that no matter what problems arose, Brown went to extremes to protect the cooperation between the IOC and YMCA.⁶⁵

Meanwhile, a serious economic crisis threatened the celebrations in Brazil. Given the financial circumstances, the *Confederação Brasileira de Desportos* did not receive funding from the Government for the preparation of the Games. The Confederation also changed leadership, and the new officials were even less experienced than the previous leaders. Behind the scenes, Brown suggested that Hopkins by-pass the authorities from the Brazilian Confederation and seek direct governmental intervention to move the Games forward. In mid-January 1922, Hopkins met with the new Confederation officials and presented a plan to settle the issue, stipulating requirements that should be met,

⁶⁵ Torres, "The Latin American 'Olympic Explosion' of the 1920s," pp. 1088-1111.

lest the Games not be supported by the IOC.⁶⁶ At the same time, correspondence between Brown and Hopkins demonstrate that they were elaborating a contingency plan to celebrate Games in Uruguay in 1923, in case the Brazilians failed in their plans for September 1922.⁶⁷

YMCA director in Rio de Janeiro, Henry Sims, entered the scene, meeting with the Brazilian Organizing Committee and other authorities, urging the government to guarantee the success of the South American Games. A new Organizing Committee was formed. The Mayor of Rio de Janeiro gave assurance that the government would secure the necessary funds for the Games. An agreement was established with a local club (*Fluminense Football Club*).⁶⁸ Operations finally began.

At the June 1922 IOC Session, after an intense debate, Brown received assurance of IOC recognition for the South American Games. Coubertin, invited to the celebrations, replied that it would not be possible for him to attend. He proposed that Baillet-Latour replace him as IOC representative. Hence, the critical Baillet-Latour travelled throughout Latin America in 1922.

The Games were finally celebrated from 27 August to 15 October 1922. According to Torres,⁶⁹ Brazilian spectators attended the sport events in massive numbers. The program included boxing, basketball, fencing, equestrian activities,

⁶⁶ Although Hopkins was not an IOC member, in order to persuade Brazilian officials, he "forwarded" IOC prestige recognition as an attribute towards recognition of "regional games."

⁶⁷ Torres, "The Latin American 'Olympic Explosion' of the 1920s," pp. 1088-1111.

⁶⁸ The work of João Malaia examined the economic history of early multi-sporting events hosted in Brazil. Although anticipated economic profits may not have materialized in 1922, Malaia found that the *Fluminense Football Club* greatly benefitted from Brazil's government funding for the construction of new sport facilities. For additional information, see: João Manuel C. Malaia Santos, "Arnaldo Guinle, Fluminense Football Club, and the Economics of Early International Sport in Rio," *Journal of Sport History* 40 (2013): 393-401.

⁶⁹ Cesar R. Torres, *Jogos Olímpicos Latino-Americanos: Rio de Janeiro 1922* (Manaus: Confederação Brasileira de Atletismo, 2012), pp. 1-147.

soccer, tennis, track and field, rowing, shooting and swimming. The competitions unfolded as scheduled, but there were problems relative to perceived bias related to refereeing decisions and uncomfortable accommodations for the athletes.

In the media reports, the YMCA was neither credited nor discredited for either the success or the demerits of the Games. On the plus side, a number of future Olympians competed in the 1922 Games in Rio de Janeiro.⁷⁰ The IOC planted at least a foothold in the region. On the other hand, Baillet-Latour's report of the Games pointed to a lack of organization; a deficit of knowledge about sport regulations; an absence of sporting education, and a disregard for authority and referees. Taken together, they caused many problems during the Games. As emphasized by Baillet-Latour's reflections as he proceeded during his tour:

I made use of the presence of sporting authorities from the countries in attendance to obtain a more precise idea of how best to orient my propaganda work. I soon realized that even before attempting to address some of the problems encountered during the Games, it would be necessary to explain the basis of the Olympic concept to the people of Latin America, since - with some very rare exceptions - there is widespread ignorance in relation to the topic.⁷¹

But Baillet-Latour also reflected on some positives. For instance, some of the athletic performances achieved, especially in track events, were a sign that those nations could soon hope for an "honorable participation in the International Games."⁷² In his report to the IOC, the Count pointed out that Latin America, in general, could be effectively incorporated into the Olympic Movement if regional sport bureaucracies were formed

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Henri Baillet-Latour, "22 Session Rome 1923. Rapports. Rap. De mission en Amérique, IOC Archives, 1923," as cited by Cesar R. Torres, *Jogos Olímpicos Latino-Americanos: Rio de Janeiro 1922* (Manaus: Confederação Brasileira de Atletismo, 2012), p. 135.

⁷² Ibid.

and properly assisted.⁷³ Then, the IOC vice-president introduced a plan for sport organization in Latin American countries, which included: the formation of a Latin American Games Organizing Committee, responsible for creating regulations, affiliation of existing national sport federations with International Federations for the purpose of applying the rules of each competition and also amateur regulations, and finally, the organization of a congress in which every country would be represented.

All in all, the IOC-YMCA partnership exerted an influence on Olympic diffusion in the region. The YMCA report on the 1922 regional Games revealed expectations of increased Latin American participation in the 1924 Olympics as a result of the so-called "Latin American Games." Based on the literature currently available, it is possible to argue that the 1922 Latin American Games intensified debates over the control of sports by different organizations in Latin American countries and marked the beginning of their final integration into the Olympic Movement. In the following years, conferences were held during IOC sessions to discuss regional Games as well as the development of sports in South America, Central America and the Far East. IOC members from those regions of the world participated in these conferences.

In July 1924 IOC members decided to change the name of the Latin American Games to South American Games. During the session, authorities also emphasized the need to establish rules for these games, to expand and strengthen affiliations of Latin American national sports federations to the International Sports Federations, and to select the host city for the next competitions. Four years later, in July 1928, representatives from Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Peru met with YMCA authorities to choose the city to host the second edition of the South American Games. In the end,

⁷³ Ibid.

participants at the meeting decided not to stage such games for a number of reasons: limited success of the first edition, large distances between countries, existence of South American Championships for the biggest sports, and financial difficulties.

Though not very successful in themselves, the Latin American Games in Rio aroused interest in regional competitions in other parts of the Latin world. Mexico, for instance, did not participate in the 1922 Latin American Games, but Alfredo B. Cuéllar, a Mexican sport enthusiast and an advocate for Mexican participation in international sport, tried to obtain government funding to send a delegation from Mexico to Rio. Unsuccessful in this attempt, Cuéllar invited Baillet-Latour to visit Mexico where plans for a Central American Games were born.

The work of Richard McGehee examined the first edition of Central American Games in Mexico City in 1926.⁷⁴ McGehee documented that after appearing at the 1922 sport competitions in Rio de Janeiro, and accepting Cuéllar's invitation, Count Baillet-Latour visited Mexico in January and February of 1923. There, he urged the creation of national sport federations and their affiliation to international federations, as well as the formation of a National Olympic Committee and the participation of Mexican athletes in the 1924 Olympic Games scheduled for Paris. Baillet-Latour also planted the idea of celebrating a regional sport event, one to be called "Central American Games."

Following Baillet-Latour's visit, and further encouragement from Mexican newspapers and sport enthusiasts who raised funds for the national team, Mexican athletes participated in the Olympics for the first time, in Paris in 1924. During those Olympics, Baillet-Latour met with representatives of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama where the idea of hosting Central American

⁷⁴ McGehee, "The Origins of Olympism in Mexico," pp.313-332.

Games in Mexico City in 1926 was reinforced. The Games would take place in the recently-built Mexican National Stadium, inaugurated in May 1924. Also, the regulations for the Games were approved at that meeting.

According to the regulations, in order to become official and guarantee IOC recognition, the event should reflect the participation of at least three countries in each sport. All participants in the Games were required to be amateurs. The games were to be called Central American, even though planned participants would include not only the Central American nations of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, but also two South American countries (Colombia and Venezuela), as well as Mexico (as a North American country), and several Caribbean countries (Cuba, Jamaica, Santo Domingo, Haiti and Puerto Rico).

According to McGehee's account, the preparations for the first Central American Games were well organized. Prominent Mexican physical educators and representatives from Cuba and Guatemala formed the organizing committee. Local media used the words "Olympics" and "Olympiad" to report on the preparations. Mexican media reports also referred to the importance of the event towards promoting Mexico's image in the world. Then, too, the Games represented an opportunity to improve relationships with other nations.



Figure 1 - The 1926 poster depicts a profile of a nude athlete holding a large stylized olive branch. The Central American Games symbol is at the top of the image.⁷⁵

Although fourteen countries were invited to the Central American Games, only Mexico, Cuba, and Guatemala registered athletes to compete. Lack of attendance was related to a combination of three factors: the lack of sport development in some countries, economic problems, and internal political troubles.⁷⁶ The program included baseball, basketball, fencing, shooting, swimming, tennis, and track and field events. The festival, modeled after the Olympics, presented both opening and closing ceremonies.

⁷⁵ The image was obtained from "The Spirit of Friendship Through Sports: poster images from the Pan American Games, 1951-1999. The exhibit was created from archives residing in the sports art and library collections of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles. It is published under the copyright of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles, 1999 and LA84 Foundation, 2007. See: <<http://www.la84.org/the-spirit-of-friendship-through-sports-poster-images-from-the-pan-american-games-1951-1999>>

⁷⁶ For example, Nicaragua was experiencing a revolution and its government accused Mexico of supporting the revolutionaries. For additional context, see: Marisa Marga, *A Nicaragua Sandinista* (Brasiliense: São Paulo, 1982).

Although there is no detailed statement about the participation of the YMCA in the process of organizing and supporting the Central American Games, McGehee reports that fencing competitions were held in the YMCA building. Local media reported enthusiastically about the success of the Games despite minor incidents.⁷⁷ By the end of the successful operations of the Central American Games, starkly different from the situation in Rio in 1922, an organizing committee was created to plan the second edition of the Central American Games, to be held in Cuba. They were staged in Havana in 1930. From the third edition on, the event was known as The Central American and Caribbean Games. With some irregularity in its 4-year-cycle, the Central American and Caribbean Games continue to this date.

Growing Pains: Avery Brundage and the Pan-American Games

Following the 1920s, initiatives to spread the Olympic Movement worldwide reflected that the 1930s proved a critical decade for global development, not only of the Olympics, but sport in general. It was in this decade that sport events crystallized the attributes that would shape the sport spectacles of the second half of the twentieth century. As a matter of fact, in the 1930s international competitions such as the Olympic Games and soccer's World Cup attained a level of popularity and worldwide significance that set each of them apart from what had been the case previously.⁷⁸

The 1930s also marked the first attempts by Latin American countries to host Olympic Games. Argentina and Brazil unsuccessfully bid for the 1936 Olympic

⁷⁷ There were media reports about some spectators who exhibited inappropriate patriotism during competitions by questioning referee's decisions.

⁷⁸ Keys, *Globalizing Sport*, p.2.

Games.⁷⁹ The Olympic Games of 1932 and 1936 marked a new stage in the decades-old festival, "shifting it from a European-based pageant for the elite to mass entertainment on a global scale."⁸⁰

By the 1930s Coubertin's original quest for spreading the Olympic Movement was a well-consolidated idea. Progressing in practical terms, he emphasized the importance of understanding sport and "Olympism" as global movements:

The sport movement is a global movement, and if we wish to appreciate its underlying characteristics as well as possible adjustments to future needs, it is above all necessary to be aware of space and time, just as if one were sensibly judging the events of universal history. It is also because this rule was applied to it from the very beginning that restored Olympism has lived and prospered. Supported by France alone it would have died in the cradle. Left to the care of Europe it would have expired in its adolescence. Whilst commenting on the Games in Paris for the *Revue de Genève*, I wrote the following: European criticism is interesting only from a documentary point of view. Far more essential to note is the idea which exists of Olympism in Manila, Tokyo, India or even in Australian and South American cities.⁸¹

Although Coubertin hardly ever provided a consistent definition for the term, he called upon "Olympism" as a means to promote international understanding and friendship.⁸² But, Coubertin was not alone in harbouring such an ideal. For the years to come, other

⁷⁹ The history of South American countries' attempts to host the Olympic Games took years until such an examination became a theme of scholarly work. Cesar Torres analyzed the Argentinean attempts to host the Olympic Games; and Brazilian scholar Katia Rubio analyzed the political aspects of Brazilian attempts to do the same. See, respectively, Cesar R. Torres, "A Persistent Desire: An Account of Buenos Aires' Efforts to Host the Olympic Games." In *Cultural Imperialism in Action: Critiques in the Global Olympic Trust : Eighth International Symposium for Olympic Research*, London, Ontario, 2006, pp.395-418; and Katia Rubio, "Postulações Brasileiras aos Jogos Olímpicos: Considerações acerca da Lenda do Distanciamento entre Política e Movimento Olímpico," *Revista Bibliográfica de Geografia Y Ciencias Sociales*, 15, no.10, 2010, accessed October 20, 2014, <http://www.ub.es/geocrit/b3w-895/b3w-895-10.htm>.

⁸⁰ Keys, *Globalizing Sport*, p2.

⁸¹ Pierre de Coubertin, "The Charter for Sports Reform," *Bullettin du Bureau International de Pédagogie Sportive*, n. 3, Lausanne, 1930, pp. 8-9. In *Olympism: Selected Writings*, ed. Norbert Müller (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 2000), p. 239.

⁸² Jeffrey Segrave, *Olympism* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1981).

sport enthusiasts embraced, idealized and capitalized upon Coubertin's Olympic ideas. American sports administrator Avery Brundage can, without question, be identified as one of those.⁸³

Brundage's involvement with the IOC is a distinct chapter in Olympic history. In fact, Avery Brundage's career and his attitudes as an IOC member, and later president of the International Olympic Committee, are exhaustively documented from political, administrative, and ideological perspectives.⁸⁴ But, his engagement with the Olympic cause in Latin America, so far, has received only peripheral attention in the broader academic literature.

Primary sources analyzed by Cesar Torres and Mengjia Zhang indicate that Avery Brundage was a key figure in the development of the Pan-American Games.⁸⁵ Indeed, his biographer, Allen Guttman, argued that Brundage's instinctive reaction to any threat to the Olympic Games was to "seek alternatives to preserve the ideal."⁸⁶ This aside, the idea of hosting Pan-American Games did not start with Brundage, nor did it experience his full engagement from the very beginning. On the contrary, it took a gestation period for Brundage to become enamoured with the event. Brundage's interest in the Pan-American Games became more than modest when he was certain that the 1940 Olympic Games would be cancelled. Brundage, then, did not conceive the idea to form Pan-American Games but, rather, he provided the crucial link between developing proposals to host such a hemispheric event. By the late 1930s, Brundage

⁸³ Senn, *Power, Politics and the Olympic Games*, p. 65-154.

⁸⁴ Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, pp. 300.

⁸⁵ See Torres, "The limits of Pan-Americanism," pp. 2547-2574; See also Zhang, "Avery Brundage and the Founding of the Pan-American Games," pp. 2-31.

⁸⁶ Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, pp. 220-224.

had not only become a well-known IOC member; he was also the president of the American Olympic Association (AOA).

There are records of one sport festival held in Dallas in 1937, which was referred to by media and organizers as “Pan-American Olympics.”⁸⁷ Such Games were part of the “Greater Texas & Pan-American Exposition.” Limited in scope, the event was locally organized by a group of Texans whose ultimate goal was to celebrate the state’s one-hundredth anniversary of independence from Mexico. The flagpoles were topped with the flags of Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, United States, Paraguay and Peru. In spite of the participation of athletes from different parts of the Americas, the event attracted limited attention internationally.⁸⁸ Mark Dyreson analyzed the newspaper coverage of the event together with the “Centennial Olympics” also held in Dallas a year before. The author argued that both events were aimed at promoting Texas’ image as an urban and touristic center. According to Dyreson, the “Pan-American sporting events also sold a version of Texas as an inviting land of opportunity for Latin Americans, in spite of the state’s long history of discrimination against Hispanics.”⁸⁹ However, the event did not have Pan-Americanism as its main purpose.

Torres' paper on the failed attempt to host Pan-American Games in Buenos Aires in 1942 is an indispensable contribution to the body of knowledge on the establishment of the Pan-American Games.⁹⁰ Acknowledging the existence of the “Pan-American”

⁸⁷ See Mark Dyreson, “‘Everything’s Bigger in Texas’: Ballyho, Bravado, and Identity at Texas’ Olympics of 1936 and 1937. In *Proceedings and Newsletter- North American Society of Sport History*, Lake Placid, 2007, pp. 94-97.

⁸⁸ Interestingly, Canadian John Wilfrid Loaring, a track athlete at the University of Western Ontario in 1935-36 who had medaled in the 1936 Olympics, won a 4th place in the 400m run at the 1937 Texas’ Pan-American event. See David Feldman, *Olympic Games: Stamps, Covers & Memorabilia, The Loaring Collection – Part 1*, Geneva, 2009.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁹⁰ See Torres, “The limits of Pan-Americanism,” p. 2548.

sport festival in Dallas, Torres suggests that Alexander Hogarty, an American who worked as Athletic Director of Ecuador, was the first to distinctly propose the organization of Pan-American Games and to diligently work on such a project by seeking support from Brundage and funding from the American government.⁹¹

Torres contextualized the political component related to the Pan-American Games foundation.⁹² The author referred to the U.S. Good Neighbor Policy⁹³ of the 1930s to illustrate how the U.S. forged a cooperative spirit of "Pan-Americanism" to strengthen economic, political, and cultural interlocution throughout the hemisphere. Sport was part of it. When writing to Brundage in 1939, Hogarty alluded to the Good Neighbour policy, emphasizing sport as a potential diplomatic tool in the region. Before that, in 1938, Hogarty had already proposed Havana as the host city of the 1940 Olympics in case war erupted in Europe.

When it became apparent that the Olympic Games scheduled for Tokyo in 1940 could not be held, Brundage fully endorsed the idea of establishing Pan-American Games, similar to the Olympics, but restricted to nations from the Americas. He stated: "The Olympic flame is temporarily extinguished and the world looks to the western hemisphere to keep alive the finest traditions of amateur sport."⁹⁴ The proposal aroused the interest of different sport officials across the Americas.

In late 1939 the Argentine Olympic Committee sent the A.O.A a letter proposing

⁹¹ Prior to Hogarty, Curt G. Pfeiffer proposed Pan-American Games in 1916 and renewed the proposal in the 1930s. Torres, "The limits of Pan-Americanism," p. 2548.

⁹² Ibid., pp.2547-2549.

⁹³ The Good Neighbor policy was one dimension of the foreign policy of the administration of United States President Franklin Roosevelt. Directed towards Latin America, the policy's main principles were those of non-intervention and non-interference in the domestic affairs of Latin America. In general, the Roosevelt administration expected that this policy would create more economic opportunities in the form of reciprocal trade agreements between the countries of the Americas. For more information, see Bryce Wood, *The Making of the Good Neighbor Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

⁹⁴ Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p. 88.

to organize a "Pan-American Olympic Tournament" in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1940.⁹⁵ Following initial rivalry between the Cubans' and the Argentineans' proposals, for yet unexplained reasons, the Cubans abandoned their plans.⁹⁶

Rapidly, the Pan-American Games were destined to become an independent project, no longer simply a one-time event to compensate for the absence of the Olympic Games because of the war. Argentina's proposal was well organized. The Argentinean officials called a congress to be held in Buenos Aires in early 1940. The purpose of the congress was to discuss systematic plans for hosting the Pan-American Games. Argentina's NOC proposed the institutionalization of an organization to lead sport in the hemisphere.

Before the first Pan-American Congress occurred, the Argentine Olympic Committee, led by Juan Carlos Palacios, constantly corresponded with Brundage. Through correspondence, Argentina's NOC complied with all the American' Olympic leader's suggestions: that the games should be modeled after the Olympic Games, on a quadrennial calendar; that competitions should be organized on a grand scale to rank second only to the Olympic Games; and that a permanent organization should be formed to administer the Games.

In August 1940 Brundage went to the first Pan-American Sport Congress in Buenos Aires.⁹⁷ On his way to Argentina, he made a brief stop in Rio de Janeiro and

⁹⁵ Torres, "The limits of Pan-Americanism," p. 2551.

⁹⁶ Hogarty criticized the Argentinean proposal. He argued that it was inconvenient to travel to Buenos Aires and, also, that the Argentinean proposal was not to be seriously considered. Meanwhile, a number of American cities including New York; Los Angeles; San Francisco; Portland, Oregon; Chicago, Philadelphia, and other communities discussed the organization of Pan-American Games. See Torres, "The limits of Pan-Americanism," p. 2551.

⁹⁷ On his way back to the U.S., Brundage visited Santiago in Chile; La Paz, Bolivia; Arequipa, and Lima in Peru; Guayaquil and Quito in Ecuador; Cali, Bogotá, and Barranquilla in Colombia. See Torres, "The Limits of Pan-Americanism," p. 2550.

São Paulo between 20 August and 30 August. Upon arriving in Argentina, Brundage was warmly greeted by Juan Carlos Palacios. Sixteen countries were represented at the Congress. The delegates discussed the election of the Games inaugural site, the competition program, the establishment of a permanent commission, the formation of an organizing committee, and Brundage's recommendation that all countries' Pan American efforts should be directed by their respective National Olympic Committees.

During the congress, Brundage suggested that for a suitable organization of the Games, the inaugural edition should be postponed until 1942. By the end of the Congress, Brundage, the only non-Latin American delegate, was appointed the president of the permanent commission, which was the supreme authority of the Pan-American Sport Organization. Buenos Aires was elected to be the host of the inaugural Pan-American Games to be held in 1942. The delegates present at the congress decided that countries not represented in the meeting could later become members of the new organization, upon approval by the group.

In 1941, correspondence between American and Argentinean NOC officials regarding the preparation of the Games was intense. Both parties referred repeatedly to the Good Neighbour Policy to emphasize the potential of sport competitions to promote international understanding. Documents analyzed by Torres demonstrate that the organizing committee of the Pan-American Games worked assiduously on their preparations (see Figure 2). The date was set, plans for the financing of the games defined, as well as for construction of the venues, the athlete's village, and a torch relay across the hemisphere.⁹⁸ A representative of the Argentinean Organizing Committee travelled throughout the hemisphere personally inviting the authorities from each

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 2555.

country to send their teams, at the same time providing updates on the preparations for the Games.

Twelve countries confirmed representation at the first Pan-American Games. A formula for a one-year countdown to these Games was devised, enhanced by the presence of several diplomats and authorities. On 7 December, only five days after the Pan-American Games Feast, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. A day later, the U.S. declared war on Japan.



Figure 2 - Although the 1942 Pan-American Games never took place, at least one poster was created to advertise them. The image shows a male figure in the foreground holding a javelin. The lithograph poster was designed by artist Falier Totaro in 1941.⁹⁹

Despite the war, Argentina's NOC maintained its lines of communication with American sport officials (mainly Brundage) to secure the U.S. team's participation in the

⁹⁹ "The Spirit of Friendship Through Sports: Poster Images from the Pan-American Games, 1951-1999," copyright of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles, 1999 and LA84 Foundation, 2007. Available at: <http://www.la84.org/the-spirit-of-friendship-through-sports-poster-images-from-the-pan-american-games-1951-1999>. Accessed 20 July 2015.

Games. Considering the American standing in international sports, the presence of their team might add significantly to the quality and credibility of the first scheduled Pan-American Games, if indeed they had been held. But, following lengthy discussions with American officials, even though Brundage strongly supported American participation, he could not overcome the prevailing thought among American sports officials that the U.S., as a nation, should devote all of its energies to the war.

Following the formal declaration of American withdrawal from the Games in April 1942, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Uruguay also announced that their participation in the first Pan-American Games would be impractical. Then, the Argentinean organizing committee formally announced the postponing of the Pan-American Games (initially, to November 1943, subsequently, to 1944). In his work, Torres claims that the cancellation of the 1942 Pan-American Games was due, in part, to the crisis in the relationship between the United States and Argentina, which became evident even before Pearl Harbor.¹⁰⁰ Importantly, Torres provided an overview of how the political context changed for both countries during WWII, arguing that the hostile political relationship between Argentina and the United States impacted the preparations for the Games.¹⁰¹

Planning to inaugurate the Pan-American Games resumed following the conclusion of World War II and the reestablishment of the quadrennial Olympic Games

¹⁰⁰ By the beginning of the twentieth century, German influence in Argentina was strong, mainly due to the presence of a large number of German immigrants in the country. This influence continually grew before both world wars. Argentina's army cultivated an admiration of the German military. Scholars found evidence that a handful of Argentinean military leaders were sympathetic to Adolf Hitler. Despite internal disputes and pressure from the United States to join the Allies during World War II, the close ties between Germany and Argentina was one of the reasons that made the latter stay neutral for most of that war. Argentina eventually conceded to the Allies' pressure, broke relations with the Axis powers, and declared war on 27 March 1945. For detailed essays on the Latin American countries' wartime experiences, see Thomas M. Leonard and John F. Bratzel, eds., *Latin America During World War II* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006).

¹⁰¹ Torres, "The limits of Pan-Americanism," pp. 2561-2562.

in 1948. Even though the effects of WWII forced the general suspension of international sport competitions in Europe, there was not a complete hiatus of international sport events in the world. Championships in individual sports took place. South American Athletics (1941, 1943, 1945), Basketball (1941, 1942, 1945), and Soccer (1941, 1942, 1945) are examples. Soon after the end of WWII, before the Olympic Games were resumed, Latin American countries engaged in regional multisport events such as the Vth Central American and Caribbean Games held in Barranquilla, Colombia in 1946; and the IInd Bolivarian Games held between 25 December 1947 and 8 January 1948 in Lima, Peru.¹⁰²

Following deliberations about when and where to host the IInd Pan-American Congress, a meeting was ultimately scheduled for London in 1948 to take advantage of the concentration of delegates who would be present at the Games of the XIVth Olympiad.

Mengjia Zhang's research on the founding of the Pan-American Games analyzed both the first and IInd Pan-American Congresses. Her findings relative to the second congress indicate that besides ratifying Avery Brundage as the president of the permanent commission, and Buenos Aires as the hosting city of the first Pan-American Games, a new date was set to celebrate the event (November 1950). During the second congress, Brundage spearheaded the dialogue urging all countries to affiliate to the IOC and National Sport Federations to the respective International Sport Federations.

Brundage also gave speeches on the importance of respecting amateurism rules and

¹⁰² The Bolivarian Games were proposed to celebrate the memory of the freedom fighter Simón Bolívar, an emblematic figure in the emancipation of South America's Spanish colonies. At the 1936 Session in Berlin, the IOC gave its agreement for these Games to be held in South America. Such a multi-sports event was inaugurated in 1938 for Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela.

eliminating commercial and political factors from sports. By then, at the first postwar IOC session in 1946, Sigfrid Edström had been elected President of the IOC; Brundage was elected Vice-President, each with no opposition.

Afterwards, the Pan-American Games were rescheduled one more time to avoid conflict with the VIth Central American and Caribbean Games scheduled for 1950. By the time the Pan-American Games were finally inaugurated in 1951, Avery Brundage loomed large as a candidate for the IOC presidency.

The proposals to host Pan-American Games included not only political but also ideological components. Avery Brundage fueled the latter (which are hardly explored in the available literature), while trying to minimize the former. Brundage found supporters within American sport organizations favorable towards his idea that through the nations of the "new world" there would be widespread participation in international competitive athletics, and that the Pan-American Games would contribute to the promotion and advancement of amateur sports.¹⁰³ While the literature on Brundage's career vividly focuses on his long battles regarding professionalism *versus* amateurism, commercialism, and governmental control over National Olympic Committees, his activities as a member of the permanent commission of the Pan-American Games have received little notice in the literature (especially post-World War II). Coupled with that, the Pan-American Games' inauguration and its aftermath have been largely underexplored in sport history.

¹⁰³ Emery, "The History of The Pan-American Games," p.9.

Chapter 2

The Sporting and Ideological Character of Avery Brundage and the Pan-American Mission

I have previously stated that Avery Brundage was a controversial figure. Such a characteristic was ascribed to Brundage by many of his contemporaries (media, sport leaders, and athletes),¹ and also by Olympic scholars who have examined several dimensions of his career.² Invariably, the controversies raised by Brundage were related to the considerable debates that the American aroused around the issues of amateurism, politics, and commercialism. Each of these points were engendered in the rhetoric of idealism, which the American persistently embraced in his dealings with sports and the Modern Olympic Movement. It is important to note that Brundage's idealism was not the only determining dimension of his approach and decisions as a sports administrator. There are ample examples of Brundage's pragmatic, realistic, and "authoritarian practices in directing sport organizations, which frequently angered even his sympathizers."³ In pragmatic terms, for example, an urge to claim television revenue for Olympic broadcasts embroiled Brundage in many lengthy debates in the 1950s and 1960s. Brundage's business background buttressed his fundamental approach towards

¹ An example of a newspaper heading that confirms how Brundage was seen as a polemical figure reads: "Controversial Brundage has Only One Aim, Purity in Amateur Sports," *The Montreal Gazette*, May 14 1956, p.40. Another example comes from a group of twenty one African-American athletes, who signed a petition asking for the resignation of Avery Brundage one month before the 1968 Olympic Games. The athletes argued that they were threatened with expulsion by Brundage if they made any demonstration during the Games. In response, the American, then IOC president, claimed that the Olympic Games were apolitical and this was a permanent policy. For more information related to this episode, see: Damion L. Thomas, *African American Athletes and Cold War Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), p. 159.

² According to Guttmann, "Brundage was unmistakably an idealist." See Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p.115.

³ Senn, *Power, Politics, and The Olympic Games*, p.68.

gaining commercial revenue for the IOC and its partner organizations. In this matter, Brundage cleverly channeled Olympic commercial television negotiations into the realm of Organizing Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOG) responsibility, thus removing the IOC from direct link to commercial taint. Fundamentally, Brundage envisioned the emerging sport television market of the 1950s and 1960s as a financial bonanza for Olympic administrators,⁴ a bonanza not to be ignored; in fact, one to be cultivated.

In essence, over the course of time, Brundage's own interpretations of the so-called Olympic ideals increasingly conflicted with the dynamics and demands of twentieth century sport contexts. Such dynamics related to the consolidation of the industrialization process, the consequences of urbanization, and the rise of nationalism, and mass sports.⁵

This chapter explores Brundage's idealistic view of sports and the Olympic Movement to present evidence of how such perspective was implicated in the foundation of the Pan-American Games. For such analysis, I have drawn extensively from the biography written by Allen Guttman, and also from the archives found in the Avery Brundage Collection.

Born in Detroit on 28 September 1887 Avery Brundage cultivated an idealist relationship with sports as a young athlete. When he was five, his family moved to Chicago where his mother and father separated. Living with his mother in her boarding

⁴ In order to protect the IOC from direct contact with commercial agencies while at the same time providing the Olympic Movement with access to the television money, Brundage spearheaded the conversation that initially established that Olympic host city organizing committees would negotiate television rights and deals (Rule 49), and that the IOC would rule on how the money would be distributed. For detailed information on the negotiation of television rights, see Robert K. Barney, Scott G. Martyn, Stephen R. Wenn, *Selling the Five Rings: The International Olympic Committee and the Rise of Olympic Commercialism* (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 2002).

⁵ For more information on the characteristics of the twentieth century sport context, see Melvin A. Adelman, *A Sporting Time: New York City and the Rise of Modern Athletics* (Urbana and Chicago, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

house, he settled in Chicago. Little is known of Brundage's childhood and his first connections with sports, but his enthusiasm for such activities while still a high school student was noted in his unfinished and unpublished autobiography manuscript.⁶

By 1905, while beginning a rigorous course of studies in civil engineering at the University of Illinois, Brundage had already excelled in several track and field events. By then, he openly demonstrated his belief that sports, mainly individual sports, were paradigms of objective achievement.⁷

Following his graduation from the University of Illinois in 1909, Brundage began a successful career in the Chicago construction industry while diligently maintaining his sports training. In 1912, after winning the Western tryouts for the pentathlon and decathlon, he qualified for the U.S. track and field team to compete in the Stockholm Olympic Games. To take advantage of the opportunity to represent the U.S. in the 1912 Olympics, Brundage resigned his position at Holabird & Roche (an architectural firm in Chicago). He believed that amateur sports demanded physical as well as moral commitment. According to Guttmann, that sacrifice was one which Brundage, afterward, expected others to make.⁸

In 1912 the IOC grappled with problems relative to the definition of amateurism, to the point that the Official Report of the Stockholm Games remarked: "it was not within

⁶ The unpublished autobiography was tentatively entitled "The Olympic Story." According to Guttmann, it begins with the arrival of a telegram inviting Brundage to participate as a representative of the United States track and field team in the 1912 Olympics and then moves backward in time to describe Brundage's enthusiasm for sports when a high school and college student. The autobiography also contrasts business and sports. Brundage provided little information regarding his family origins. See Avery Brundage, "The Olympic Story," Avery Brundage Collection, Boxes 330-331, University of Illinois Archives. In Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, pp.1-27.

⁷ Although Brundage admitted that he liked playing team sports such as baseball and football, his admiration for individual competence was unparalleled. Brundage described that track and field events appealed to him because they were "a demonstration of individual skill and supremacy." See: Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p.83.

⁸ Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p. 24.

the bounds of possibility to draw up a definition of the term 'Amateur' that should be common to all branches of athletics."⁹ Under an explanatory section named "Amateur Definitions," the Official Report of the 1912 Games established a general amateur rule applicable for specific competitions, namely: athletics, tug-of-war, and wrestling. The rule determined that an amateur was someone who had never:

- a) competed for a money prize or a monetary consideration, or in any way drawn pecuniary gain from the exercise of his sport;
- b) competed against a professional;
- c) taught in any branch of athletics for payment;
- d) sold, pawned, hired out, or exhibited for payment any prize won in a competition.¹⁰

Brundage competed in the pentathlon and decathlon in the 1912 Olympics, events to which the aforementioned rules applied. But, amateurism became an indisputable trace of the American's idealistic view of sports based on his own understanding and interpretation of the term.

⁹ Swedish Olympic Organizing Committee, *Official Report of the Games of the V Olympiad* (Stockholm: SOOC, 1913), p. 95.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 95-98.

Although the grounds of the amateur concept rested on modern elitist assumptions relative to society and social class,¹¹ for Brundage the "amateur code"¹² came from his mistaken view of Ancient Greek Athletics. It related to a moral and ethical commitment by those who competed "for the love of the game itself,"¹³ not for materialistic motives. As an athlete, Avery Brundage fully embraced such ideal. As a sports administrator, he referred to the amateur code innumerable times. For him, it was not only a rule but a "thing of spirit."¹⁴

Brundage was disappointed with his athletic performance in his Olympic experience as an athlete. He finished sixth in the pentathlon, and he failed to complete the decathlon. Nonetheless, he fully praised what he called "the Olympic spirit." Brundage's view of the Olympic movement is documented in his autobiography. The conclusive remarks referring to his participation in the 1912 Games pointed to the fact that by then his "conversion to Coubertin's religion, the Olympic Movement, was complete."¹⁵ Guttmann suggested that, for Brundage, the ethical component of that religion could be summed up in a single word: amateurism. Noticeably, it might be emphasized, it was Brundage's own appropriation of the concept that prevailed.

Another episode that emerged from the 1912 Games confirmed Brundage's commitment to the "Olympic religion." Amongst his rivals in the 1912 Olympics was Jim Thorpe, the American athlete who was first called a legend, but later got stripped of his

¹¹ For more information on the modern origins of amateurism, see David C. Young, *The Olympic Myth of Greek Amateur Athletics* (Chicago: Ares Publishers, 1984).

¹² Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p. 116.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p.116.

medals for violating the "amateur code."¹⁶ According to Guttmann, "it was Brundage's misfortune not only to compete against a legend but also to believe that the fateful punishment meted out to the hero was fully justified by the hero's moral inadequacy."¹⁷

Guttmann cites more examples of Brundage's idealist relationship with sports as an athlete. One of them is found in a report written by his coach, Martin Delaney. The coach revealed that the young American was extremely upset when his opponents cheated. In Guttmann's words, "the cheaters jeopardized the ideal world of fair play and justice that Brundage sought in sports."¹⁸

Following his participation in the 1912 Olympics, and upon returning to the U.S., Brundage became a superintendent for the construction firm of John Griffiths and Son. In 1915 he began his own company, which built factories, hotels, and apartment buildings. He became a successful and honest businessman, described by Guttmann as a "self-made man." Despite the demands of his growing business, Brundage continued to be highly active in competitive sports. Indeed, his finest athletic achievements came after the disappointments in Stockholm.¹⁹

When approaching the end of his track career, the Chicago businessman involved himself in sports administration through the Chicago Athletic Association. In 1919 Brundage began to assume administrative responsibilities within the Athletic Amateur Union (A.A.U), at a time when the institution had gained control of amateur athletics in the United States. In the 1920s Avery Brundage became president of both

¹⁶ Thorpe was punished because he allegedly played semiprofessional summer baseball while at the Carlisle Indian School, and had been paid to play football. For a detailed account on the history of Jim Thorpe, see: Kate Buford, *Native American son: The life and sporting legend of Jim Thorpe* (New York: Random House LLC, 2010).

¹⁷ Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p. 27.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁹ In 1916, Brundage won the all-around U.S. championship in Newark, New Jersey.

the A.A.U and the American Olympic Association (A.O.A). Too involved in his construction company, Brundage did not attend the Antwerp Games in 1920, but he was a spectator at the 1924 Paris Olympics as a member of the A.O.A.

As a sports administrator, Brundage firmly advocated that the Olympic Games were "an idealistic enterprise confined by their charter to amateurs."²⁰ Such idealistic perspective influenced his administrative judgments throughout his career. Brundage's disputes to preserve the Olympic Movement and its Games over the years are well documented by Guttman.²¹ A classic example is his definitive role in the American decision to attend the 1936 Berlin Games despite the calls for boycott within the A.O.A. Between 1933 and 1936 the Olympics scheduled for Berlin became an issue between the German National Socialist regime, the International Olympic Committee, and anti-Nazi supporters of an Olympic boycott. In spite of considerable organized public opinion in support of a boycott, the views of the American Olympic Committee based, in part, on Avery Brundage's on-site examination of the situation, prevailed. Maynard Brichford²² indicated that Brundage "failed to see beyond the Nazi government's superb performance as Olympic hosts and its appearance as a formidable bulwark against communism and perceive the extent of its commitment to racial politics and military

²⁰ Avery Brundage, Circular Letter to IOC Members, April 12, 1954 in Senn, *Power, Politics, and The Olympic Games*, p.112.

²¹ Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, pp. 9-317.

²² In 1975, Maynard Brichford was the leader of the team responsible for processing and cataloguing the Avery Brundage Collection at the University of Illinois. Brichford did not write a complete Brundage biography, but he has published a variety of articles based on ABC materials.

aggression.”²³ Political propaganda or not, the 1936 Games were "unquestionably an important step on Avery Brundage's path to Olympic leadership."²⁴

Brundage's ascendance in his sports administrator career led him to IOC membership in 1936, marking the beginning of a lifetime dedication to that institution, energetically and constantly defending his earlier beliefs in amateurism, fighting commercialism, and negating the influence of politics. Brichford described Brundage as “both an idealist and an ideologue.”²⁵ He explained that “when convinced that his course of action was correct, he seldom gave ground and delighted in battling and baiting the press.”²⁶ As will be examined in this chapter, Brundage's beliefs were visible throughout his involvement in Pan-American Games.

²³ Maynard Brichford, “Avery Brundage and Racism.” In *Global and Cultural Critique: Problematizing the Olympic Games: Fourth International Symposium for Olympic Research*, London, Ontario, 1998, pp.129-134.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 81.

²⁵ Brichford, *Avery Brundage and Racism*, p. 132.

²⁶ Ibid.

Alexander Hogarty and Avery Brundage: Diplomatic Motives and the Issue of American Athletic Superiority

This section provides evidence that when the idea of hosting the Pan-American Games came to Brundage's attention in the 1930s, in time, the continental event became framed within the American's idealistic view of sports. However, prior to envisioning the continental Games from such a perspective, two issues permeated Brundage's initial interest in the Pan-American Games: the political benefits of the proposed Games for improving inter-American relationship; and the American athletic superiority that threatened the diplomatic potential of the event.

As previously mentioned, to discuss the possibility of hosting Pan-American Games, Brundage was initially approached by Alexander Hogarty, whose idea was to host such an event in Havana. Though the idea did not materialize, Hogarty's contact with Brundage was critically important to the development of the Pan American Games.

Hogarty worked in different South and Central American countries in the 1920s and 1930s. Hired by authorities in a number of those countries to serve their respective National Olympic Committees and advise in sport matters, Hogarty built a reputation leading to his appointment as head coach of the Brazilian track and field team at the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris. He was also Olympic coach for the Cuban and Panamanian teams.²⁷ In 1938, when Hogarty contacted Brundage, he was the coach of the Ecuadorian national track and field team. Thus, having lived in the region, Hogarty had a reasonable knowledge of the sport systems in both Central and South America,

²⁷ *American Eagle*, 26 April 1955, p.4

and the relationship between the United States and other western hemisphere Republics.

Hogarty's experience in Latin America proved to be particularly important for Brundage's first contacts exposure to the idea of hosting a continental event. Brundage demonstrated early on that he had little knowledge of the sports scenario in Latin America. In correspondence with Horgarty, Brundage's initial concern in response to the proposed Games was to note the discrepancy between the level of athletic performances of the U.S. in comparison to the other American countries. Then A.O.A president, Brundage suggested to hold such sport contests in the United States between the U.S. team and a combined South American or South and Central American team. Hogarty explained to Brundage that, from a standpoint of organization, the U.S. would be the best place to hold the events. However, Hogarty advised, Latin Americans would resent "the big brother attitude."²⁸ He added:

Your plan of an all-star team selected from all the countries of Central and South America would be fine if such a thing were possible but, for many and various reasons, such a plan would be unfeasible. In the first place, these countries are all very jealous of each other and there would be no possible basis on which such a selection could be made as the distances are so great that an elimination would be out of the question and besides this they would never consent to compete as a unit.²⁹

National rivalries stood out as the reason that rendered the combined team proposed by Brundage unfeasible.

²⁸ Alexander J. Hogarty to Avery Brundage, 15 August 1939, Avery Brundage Collection, 1908-1975 (hereafter ABC), Box 202, Reel 116, Archives and Research Collections Centre, Weldon Library, Western University, London, Ontario, Canada.

²⁹ Ibid.

Interestingly, Hogarty's understanding of the sport scenario in Latin America was not far from what Coubertin reported almost fifteen years earlier. When addressing the issue of amateurism, Coubertin³⁰ warned:

'Latin' sports are inspired by a different spirit. Above all else, this form of athletic endeavor tends to bring athletes together in view of the results to be achieved, the victory to be won...The competitions are certainly passionate, though at times the system does manage to overcome even the most zealous national passions. That is why I call it Latin. South America is beginning to provide significant support for it (competitive and passionate spirit). It is clear that its influence is gradually increasing, rather rapidly.³¹

While working as a coach in several Latin American countries in the 1920s and 1930s, Hogarty might have witnessed many of those passionate demonstrations in the competition environment that Coubertin described. It is important to highlight that, in general, governments in the 1920s and 1930s embraced sport as a medium for promoting national prestige. Politicians, military leaders and sport officials commonly cited the defense of national honour as a central justification for participating in international competition.³² Thus, accompanying the phenomena of other regions of the world, Latin American countries experienced the rise of such nation-making process through sports.³³ In other words, the region's physical culture reflected the use of sport as a tool to construct national identity. Such a process fueled national rivalries based on the ruling rationale of increasing the sentiment of nationhood through sporting prowess.

³⁰ Coubertin's observations of Latin and South American national passions were mainly based on Baillet-Latour's visit to the region, which emphasized the behavior of athletes and spectators at the regional competitions that the latter attended in the regional games of 1922.

³¹ Pierre de Coubertin, "L'amateurisme au Congrès de Prague, 1925," in *Olympism: Selected Writings*, ed. Norbert Müller (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 2000), 652. Parentheses mine.

³² Barbara J. Keys, *Globalizing Sport: National Rivalry and International Community in the 1930s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 35-40.

³³ Mark Dyreson, "Globalizing the Nation-Making Process: Modern Sport in World History," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 20, no.1 (2003): 91-106.

Soccer was a significant example of this process, as it was for "the tiny South American nation of Uruguay."³⁴

The evidence examined in this study suggests that, initially, neither Hogarty nor Brundage defined amateurism or any idealistic motive as a primary goal to be achieved through the organization of Pan-American Games. Instead, when writing to American sport authorities to find support for hosting the Pan-American Games, Hogarty emphasized the political and diplomatic benefits of holding a hemispheric sport event. He did not mention the effect of the Games for the athletes or sport leaders, but for the governments of all countries in the Americas. Hogarty wrote to President Franklin D. Roosevelt and to the U.S. Department of State emphasizing the diplomatic potential of continental Games. Then, he suggested that Brundage should write to the Inter-Departmental Committee on cooperation with the American Republics, "as they would be interested in putting such a move across for the political purpose of getting all of these nations together at which time Pan-Americanism, peace pacts and good neighbor policies could be regulated."³⁵ Although the idea of promoting peace might have appealed to Brundage in allusion to the Olympic ideal of international understanding, evidence demonstrates that he embraced the good neighbour argument when writing to American authorities emphasizing the role of athletic meetings as "enhancing inter-American relations."³⁶ Even though one could say that Brundage and Hogarty emphasized such diplomatic arguments to captivate their targeted audience because

³⁴ Dyreson, "Globalizing the Nation-Making Process," p.102. This issue is further explored by Uruguayan scholar Eduardo Galeano, who argued that his country's consecutive victories in soccer in the 1924 and 1928 Olympics, as well as in the Soccer World Cup in 1930 were the most significant sporting events in shaping his nation's identity. See more in: Eduardo Galeano, *Soccer in Sun and Shadow* (London: Verso Books, 1999).

³⁵ Alexander J. Hogarty to Avery Brundage, 15 August 1939, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

³⁶ Avery Brundage to Cordell Hull, American Secretary of State, 22 October 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

they were seeking support for the Pan-American Games, I argue that this was not the case because personal correspondence between Brundage and Hogarty revolved around the same political and diplomatic points.

Brundage followed Hogarty's suggestion. In general, the Department of State of the United States responded supportively to the idea of hosting Pan-American Games. However, as international political circumstances developed towards the imminence of World War II, dissenting arguments emerged. Although some were directly related to the war, others pointed to the argument that American superiority in sports threatened friendly competitions. And, one can surmise, if such superiority endangered friendly athletic contests, the Games would not have represented the expected improvement in inter-American relations, if they had indeed materialized at that time.

As to the operational plan, the presumed dominance of American athletes continued to be a major concern for both Brundage and Hogarty. The latter wrote a long letter to Brundage providing information on the sports scenario in Latin America, pondering on the sports program of the proposed games in order "to equalize the contests:"³⁷

I purposely left out the hurdles, high jump, pole vault, hammer, mile relay and decathlon as the U.S. would be too strong in these events, but if desired we might add the Pentathlon which would give 18 events and make an interesting meet in which the U.S. would not appear to have such a tremendous edge as to kill the interest...These people are very proud and patriotic and if they could win a couple of events such as the hop, step and jump, javelin, 100 or 200 meters, 5000 or 10,000 or 25 kilometer races they would consider the meet a success and it would give track and field a tremendous uplift in Central and South America.³⁸

³⁷ Alexander J. Hogarty to Avery Brundage, 15 August 1939, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

³⁸ Ibid.

As can be noticed, Hogarty demonstrated that he was concerned with the effects of the American athletic superiority on public interest in the sport competitions (specifically in the development of track and field). While suggesting that a "a couple of victories" for Central and South Americans could bring popularity to track and field events in the regions, Hogarty demonstrated that he was interested in attracting the public for a very specific group of athletic events: male competitions. He wrote:

I believe it would be a good idea to leave women out of this first venture with a set of Pan-American Games, although during the past year women were included in track, basket-ball and swimming in both Central and South America, but I think the Games would be easier handled without them and besides it would greatly facilitate transportation matters.³⁹

Although Hogarty argued that leaving "women out of this" could facilitate the operation of the games, the long history of inequities between men and women might have reflected on his arguments. In the 1930s the scenario for women's participation in international sport competitions was increasingly changing from what had previously been an unwelcoming environment. The official inclusion of women's track and field events in the sports program of the 1928 Olympics is certainly a milestone in sport history. Despite the fact that Latin American women had a history of urging political leaders to consider gender in labor regulation, civil codes, public health programs, and politics,⁴⁰ the long-held social and scientific assumption that sports were dangerous for women remained a challenging social stigma for a long time.⁴¹

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ To understand better the development of feminism as a factor in the process of modernizing South American countries see: Asuncion Lavrin, *Women, Feminism and Social Change in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, 1890–1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

⁴¹ Brazilian swimmer Maria Lenk was the first South American woman to ever compete in the Olympic Games. See Sebastião Votre and Ludmila Mourão, "Ignoring Taboos: Maria Lenk, Latin American Inspirationalist," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 18 (2001): 196-218.

When plans to host Pan-American Games in Havana were abandoned, the Argentinean proposal prevailed, and since the early plans to schedule the first Pan-American Games in Buenos Aires, women's sports were included in the planned program of events.⁴² Although Brundage was frequently accused of advocating for the exclusion of women's sports by many sportswriters, the data gathered in this study provides no evidence suggesting that Brundage supported Hogarty's opinion on the exclusion of women; nor that he was opposed to the inclusion of women's events in the program of the Argentinean proposal.⁴³

Brundage's idealistic view of sports meets the Pan-American Games

This section discusses how Brundage's trip to South America in the late summer of 1940 changed his perspective on the Pan-American Games. Based on the data consulted for this study, it is possible to suggest that it was during Brundage's first trip to South America that he placed idealistic motives as one of the main purposes of establishing games that would include all nations of the Americas.

By late 1939, in the early stages of his contact with the Argentineans, Brundage held firmly to the good neighbor argument to underscore the plans for inaugurating Pan-American Games. In February 1940 Avery Brundage wrote to the A.A.U officials mentioning the South American proposal to host a hemispheric event. In his letter

⁴² Organizing Committee of the First Pan-American Games, "*First Pan-American Games General Rules and Programme*," Buenos Aires 1942, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁴³ Guttman pointed out that Brundage was against women's participation in certain events, which he considered too strenuous. However, Guttman argued, Brundage personally advocated for the reduction of women sports in the Olympic program, but not for their exclusion. See Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, p.190.

Brundage referred to the importance of improving the relationship between the U.S. and its neighbors. He also reported that, at that point, he had no detailed information on the plans of the Argentinean Olympic Committee, but, although time was short to arrange an event to be properly inaugurated in mid-1940, he wrote: "We are endeavoring to improve our relations with South America, and they will undoubtedly be offended if we do not participate in their meeting."⁴⁴ One can assume that such concerns related to Hogarty's previous advice. It is noteworthy that only six months later, Brundage, who had had no clear idea of the Argentinean plans months earlier, went to South America and was elected the first president of the Pan-American Sports Organization.

Before the first Pan-American Congress in Buenos Aires, Brundage's correspondence with Argentina's NOC president demonstrated that the event was not only to serve diplomatic purposes but also "to unite the athletic interests of the countries of the Western Hemisphere."⁴⁵ An in-depth examination of Brundage's response to the Argentinean proposal demonstrates that following his trip to South America to attend the first Pan-American Congress in Buenos Aires, he gradually implicated the amateur ideal into the purpose of celebrating Pan-American Games. On the basis of the examined evidence, it seems fair to suggest that the idea for founding the Pan-American Games was originally planted on diplomatic grounds, but gradually became a missionary endeavor in the mind of the "apostle" Avery Brundage, "a prophet of Coubertin's religion."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Avery Brundage to the Members of the American Olympic Committee, 24 February 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁴⁵ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 29 June 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁴⁶ Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p.116.

In his report to the Executive Committee of A.O.A on his participation at the Pan-American Congress, Brundage remarked on the "friendly sporting spirit"⁴⁷ that permeated the three days of deliberation during which the delegates discussed the objectives of the new organization in operational terms as well as "the promotion of public interest and participation in amateur sport in the constituent countries."⁴⁸

During his journey of approximately 20,000 miles throughout the region (according to his own account), Brundage visited the capitals of all South American nations with the exception of two.⁴⁹ The journey began with a flight on Pan-American Airways from Chicago on 14 August 1940. During his trip Brundage spoke to the presidents of three countries, United States Ministers, leaders in business and public life, press representatives, and heads of sport governing bodies. Brundage was praised by authorities in South America. He reported that his reception in each country was most "friendly and cordial."⁵⁰ Brundage noted:

Because of the harmonious spirit which actuated the Congress in Buenos Aires, and which I found in every country, I am sure the new organization will contribute greatly to the development of friendship, good will, and mutual understanding between the countries of the Western Hemisphere.⁵¹

As an example, when in Lima, the Peruvian capital, a meeting was hastily organized by national sport governing bodies in honour of the recently elected president of the Pan-American Permanent Organization and president of the American Olympic Association.

⁴⁷ Report of Avery Brundage on The Pan-American Sport Congress Held in Buenos Aires, August 28-31, 1940 to the Executive Committee of the American Olympic Association, Members of the American Olympic Committee, to the Presidents and Secretaries of the Organizations holding membership in the American Olympic Association (hereafter Report on the Pan-American Sport Congress 1940), 10 October 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Brundage did not mention the capital cities of Paraguay and Venezuela.

⁵⁰ Report on the Pan American Sport Congress 1940, 10 October 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Brundage gave a speech to representatives in charge of Peruvian sports, taking the opportunity to advise on the importance of pursuing "the high ideals sponsored by the International Olympic Committee."⁵² Referring to the "restoration" of the Olympic Games in Athens, and to the successful Olympics in Berlin in 1936, Brundage advocated for the importance of promoting

a sporting organization that contributes more than any other human activity to the cultivation of friendship and good understanding between the nations of the American continent, especially when so many forces aiming at the destruction of the high ideals of mankind are engaged in a devastating struggle.⁵³

Brundage attributed the growing expansion of the modern Olympics to the benefits found in the practice of amateur sports. These benefits included the health of young people, and the "moral satisfaction of a decent life which disciplines the will and forms the character so indispensable to the daily task."⁵⁴ He further explained that through sports "the athlete learns that to achieve results it is necessary to strive with great physical and moral energy." Later in his speech, Brundage forged a link between the Olympic Games, Ancient Greece, and amateurism:

Greece instituted the first Olympic Games and kept in the forefront as long as the Games remained essentially amateur. When Greece allowed sport to be commercialized she quickly began to lose the prominent position she had for so long occupied.⁵⁵

⁵² Brundage's Speech at the Reception given by the Peruvian National Sporting Committee, [undated] 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁵³ Report on the Pan-American Sport Congress 1940, 10 October 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁵⁴ Brundage's speech at the Reception given by the Peruvian National Sporting Committee, [undated], ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

In his embellished speech, Brundage boosted empathy for amateur sports while strengthening the bonds between the three Americas:

I believe that the actual moment of world-wide upheaval is precisely when three Americas ought to make endeavour to demonstrate the utmost of what they are, by themselves, capable of doing in initiating the Pan-American Olympic Games, seconding the agreements reached in the late Congress held in Buenos Aires by sixteen countries.⁵⁶

Brundage asked the nations of the three Americas "to aid, as a question of national honor, the development of the (Pan-American) meetings so that they may constitute a great success."⁵⁷ Brundage also opined that the Pan-American Games should serve "to show in obvious fashion that sport is the only activity free from unhealthy jealousies, rivalries and tricks."⁵⁸

Brundage complimented the countries he visited for having "persons of great capability and energy"⁵⁹ directing sport organizations. He also noted that he proved the existence of "a spirit of great friendship and comradeship," and "had evidence of real love for the practice of truly amateur sports."⁶⁰

In fact, the trip across South America seem to have provided Brundage with first-hand information regarding the sport scenario in the region, which increased his expectations on the development of the Pan-American Games. He commented on his "fellow-countrymen's" impressions of South America, those who inadvertently thought that the region was a place where "revolutions abound and bullfights are of frequent

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Brundage's speech at the Reception given by the Peruvian National Sporting Committee, undated, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116. Parentheses mine.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

occurrence."⁶¹ It may well have been that Brundage was not referring exclusively to his fellow countrymen, but to his own impressions of the region before the trip. He continued:

Travelling and visiting as I have done, one arrives at the heartening knowledge of the existence of highly valuable and ancient manifestations of culture throughout the Continent...Important cities of South America offer tangible evidence of great cultural advancement."⁶²

As Greece had an "appealing aura"⁶³ for Coubertin and his conception of the Modern Olympic Movement, the "appeal" of ancient practices in South American cities seem to have had an effect on Brundage's view of the region's culture and traditions.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Young, *The Olympic Myth of Greek Amateur Athletics*, p.67.



Figure 3 - Brundage arrives in Lima, Peru in 1940.⁶⁴

Before closing his speech in Lima, Brundage reminded the attendees of the Peruvian gathering that it was necessary to keep sport "completely divorced from the influence of internal politics, for such influences quickly originate evils of such magnitude that they cause inevitable disappearance of the true sporting spirit."⁶⁵

⁶⁴ The photograph was published in Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, p.144. The illustration is undated and Guttman explored no further details of Brundage's visit to the Peruvian capital.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

Upon returning home, Brundage enthusiastically described the "great and growing interest in amateur sport throughout the continent,"⁶⁶ and the newly built sport facilities. Based on those indications, Brundage envisioned "a great development in the region's immediate future."⁶⁷ In terms of athletic performances, he noted that "some surprisingly good performances have already been made in South and Central American countries."⁶⁸

Brundage professed to be surprised by the cultural developments he found in the South American capitals that he visited. Obviously, too, he felt praised by the treatment and reception accorded to him by his hosts. Taken together, such factors support the argument that Brundage's expectations relative to the Pan-American Games changed as a result of his trip to South America. Brundage was no longer thinking exclusively about the improvement of Inter-American relations, but on the potential of the Pan-American Games to motivate more athletes to embrace the amateur ideal and other Olympic values. Following the first Pan-American Congress, Brundage emphasized exactly that sentiment. When communicating with Juan Carlos Palacios, he wrote greeting words in Spanish and again commented on the friendly atmosphere he found in Argentina:

Señor Juan Carlos Palacios,

[...] Once more I must tell you how greatly I enjoyed my brief visit in Buenos Aires. My only regret was that I did not have more time to spend in your interesting country where I found such a friendly atmosphere. Sportsmen speak the same language in every country, and my trip through South

⁶⁶ Report on the Pan American Sport Congress 1940, 10 October 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

America only confirmed my view - that amateur sport provides the most fertile field for the development of international goodwill.⁶⁹

Brundage's message demonstrated his interest in enhancing and personalizing ties with South American authorities.

Bureaucratizing the Pan-American Games

Brundage returned to the United States with an addition to his already busy agenda as president of A.O.A: the duty of helping to systematize, institutionalize, and materialize the Pan-American Sports Organization. His first presidency of PASO was not merely that of a long distance advisory character. He was active, attentive, and tried to contribute operationally to formalize and materialize plans for hosting Pan-American Games. The Argentineans, in turn, had the responsibility of forming an Organizing Committee and executing the necessary steps to establish the inaugural continental event's in a successful fashion.

Brundage adopted strategies to assure that the Pan-American Games followed the model of the Olympic Games. He sent the reports of the Organizing Committees of the Los Angeles and Berlin Games to the Argentineans, expecting that both could "outline all the steps that were taken"⁷⁰ in those "outstanding events."⁷¹

Brundage also advised the Argentineans on financial issues. He explained the potential value of the Pan-American Games if they were "successfully staged in the

⁶⁹ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 29 October 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

grand manner."⁷² He also noted: "the benefits will continue many years after the Games have been finished if they are well managed."⁷³ Mentioning the estimated budget and investments of the recently cancelled Helsinki Games of the XIIth Olympiad as an example, and commenting on the unknown amount of money spent in Berlin, Brundage tried to demonstrate that such investments were commonly returned many times over. Brundage cited information from the Chamber of Commerce in Los Angeles which estimated that US\$60 million were spent by visitors to Southern California during the 1932 Games. Brundage noted the number of visitors who spent money in hotels, restaurants, stores, and shops when attending international sport competitions. Visitors, Brundage said, also carry back home "a great impression of your country, as I did, and will encourage visits from others."⁷⁴ To illustrate the public interest in international sport events, Brundage reported to the Argentinean Olympic Committee that tickets for the 1940 Games were sold a year in advance. But, he pondered:

Pan-American Games, of course, are new and you can hardly expect such a demand, but I am sure that you will be satisfied by the response if the Games are advertised adequately. The best of it is, that vast amounts of space can be obtained without charge by a clever publicity manager. The number of columns that the newspapers devoted to my trip, without any urging, was an indication of this.⁷⁵

Brundage advised the Organizing Committee of the Pan-American Games to count on an "experienced man"⁷⁶ to devote time to the promotion and conduct of the Games, and

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 29 October 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

also on "a few important public spirited citizens and civic leaders."⁷⁷ Other guidelines Brundage included: sending bulletins, at regular intervals, to the sports authorities in the various countries; asking the President of Argentina to write a letter to the Presidents of the other countries of the Americas mobilizing their support; promote meetings for international organizations interested in physical education and sport to be held during the Pan-American Games; writing to transportation companies and travel agencies asking for support because they could provide valuable publicity and advertising.

Brundage expressed his concerns with several issues. One of them was related to the name of the organization. He suggested that the name of the institution should be "*Asociación or Confederación Deportivo Pan-Americano*,"⁷⁸ and that he would then be the president of the *Comite Deportivo Pan-Americano* (inside the bigger association). Brundage also asked Palacios about the individual expenses connected to the organization, reminding him that the membership price of sport organizations in different countries should be established, and that constituent members should be notified of their individual subscriptions.

Reporting on his trip through other South American capital cities, Brundage informed the Argentinean Olympic Committee that Chile and Colombia were disappointed that soccer was not included in the preliminary list of sport events. Brundage also offered an explanation from the Colombian Olympic Committee on the absence of its representative at the Congress in Buenos Aires. However, he was suspicious of the Colombians' argument that the Committee could not afford to send one of its members all the way to Buenos Aires:

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 29 October 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

I gained the impression, however, that they might have been alarmed at the effect Pan-American Games would have on the Central American Games in which Colombia participates and the Bolivar Games which originated in Colombia. The next Central American Games are to be held in Barranquilla in January 1942 and great preparations are being made in that enterprising city for this event. However, I was informed that Colombia - in addition to Venezuela and Panama - (after 1942) might withdraw from the Central American Games in order to concentrate on the Bolivar Games. The reason of this, I was informed, was the great expense of participating in the Games that are already established. This includes not only the Central American and Bolivar Games, but the annual South American Championships in all of the different sports."⁷⁹

Foreseeing some rivalry between regional and continental events, Brundage was proactive in suggesting that the organizing committee of the Pan-American Games avoided conflicting dates with the other sport events scheduled for 1942 in South America. He added:

In 1942, there will be three major events in South America in one year. I gathered that they were rather skeptical in Colombia of the success of Pan-American Games because of the long distances and the time and money required for participation. I assured them that it was not the intent of the new organization to interfere with any established event. The Pan-American Games, in my opinion, should become next in importance to the Olympic Games. Central American and Bolivarian Games can serve in a sense as preliminaries to the main event - the Pan American Games. Each will augment the other.⁸⁰

With that aside, Brundage also gained some insight from the Colombian Olympic Committee, which determined that the National Olympic Committee must be represented by sportsmen rather than by members of the diplomatic corps. The Colombians explained that this ruling was made because of their experience at the Central American Games.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 29 October 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

There were so many political or diplomatic representatives present at those events who knew nothing of sport "that it was almost a waste of time to hold them."⁸¹ Brundage claimed that such a rule should be adopted by the Pan-American Sports Organization.

In addition to the decisions relative to the staging of the Pan-American Games, the first Congress established the promotion of public interest and the participation of the constituent countries in amateur sports as general principles of the Pan-American Sports Organization. On 29 October 1940, at the meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Olympic Association in New York, the general principles of the Pan-American Games were unanimously approved, "if not inconsistent with the policy of the United States."⁸²

Members of the A.O.A. Executive Committee requested a supplemental report from Brundage, which he indeed composed. In the supplementary report, Brundage mentioned the issue of American participation in the Pan-American Games scheduled for 1942, urging that A.O.A members determine how the American team was to be organized. Brundage argued that the A.O.A had no jurisdiction over this issue because it was solely concerned with Olympic participation. However, he advised, a separate organization would mean double administrative expense, two campaigns for funds, and much duplication of time and effort as well as probable confusion in the minds of the public. Based on such arguments, the A.O.A. decided that the National Olympic Committee would handle participation in the Pan-American Games. However, it might be noted, public confusion was inevitable. Information published in Argentinean

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Supplementary Report of Avery Brundage on the First Pan American Sport Congress, 18 November 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

newspapers incorrectly announced that the A.O.A, under Brundage's presidency, involved a relationship with the International Olympic Committee in the organization of the Pan-American Games. The Argentinean Olympic Committee reacted by emphasizing that the Pan-American Games were to be exclusively organized by the Pan-American Sports Organizing Committee, an "organization in which only the countries of the American countries belong."⁸³ The Argentinean Olympic Committee wrote to Brundage and further explained that it was only a matter of courtesy to inform the IOC about the Pan-American Games, clarifying that the Pan-American Games were not intended to replace the Olympics.

It cannot be thought, therefore, that in the organization of the Pan American Sports Games gentlemen belonging to European countries who do not have a government of their own will be able to take part... According to newspaper information (this is what) some members of your American Olympic Committee seem to think.⁸⁴

In that letter the Argentinean Olympic Committee also emphasized the capability of the American nations to demonstrate to the world how the countries of that continent could "travel over the wide and luminous routes of sport toward a definite and indestructible intra-fraternity."⁸⁵

Brundage responded in a letter in which he stated upfront that the Argentinean newspaper reports on that subject were not accurate. He explained that he had made a complete report of the proceedings of the First Pan-American Sports Congress to the American Olympic Association and its members, including practically all of the amateur sport governing bodies of the

⁸³ Argentine Olympic Committee to Avery Brundage, 4 November 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁸⁴ Ibid. Parentheses mine.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

United States. Brundage guaranteed that everyone understood that the Pan-American Games were "to be free and independent of outside control, and that the Pan-American Congresses are to be completely autonomous."⁸⁶ He stated:

We here in the United States have the same views on this subject as you in South America. These Games are an American institution that should be controlled in a democratic manner entirely and exclusively by Americans. I have explained that we have decided to use Olympic rules and to adopt the regulations of the great International Federations because they were satisfactory and in common use, and not because we yielded sovereignty to any other organization. If at any time the Congress decides to adopt different rules, it naturally has full power to do so...I regret that there was any misunderstanding caused by improper interpretations of the discussion at the recent American Olympic Committee meeting...the views of the real amateur sportsmen of the United States are the same as those held in Argentina, however.⁸⁷

Brundage appealed to those who identified as "real sportsmen" to work around the situation. At the same time, he wanted to avoid any kind of indispositions with the IOC, which could threaten his aspirations regarding Olympic leadership. Brundage skillfully managed to strengthen the idea that the Pan-American Games were independent, while at the same time taking care of the Olympic interests:

I have a letter from President Baillet-Latour of the International Olympic Committee who is much concerned because the games which are to be held in Buenos Aires in 1942 have incorrectly been referred to by newspapers and other publications as Pan-American "Olympic" Games. I shall inform him that this misuse of the word "Olympic" did not originate in the Pan-American Congress. There is, of course, only one Olympic Games and great confusion results from the improper use of the word "Olympic" and its derivatives. I trust that you will do everything within your power to stop errors of this kind. You might give prominence in your official publicity to a statement on the subject.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Avery Brundage to Argentine Olympic Committee, 5 December 1940, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Such networking abilities might have helped Brundage to secure the confidence of Latin American sport leaders, gathering support for his future IOC presidential election. While plans for the Pan-American Games scheduled for 1942 were still on, Brundage continued to protect the Olympic Movement by alerting the Argentinean Olympic Committee of the misuse of the word "Olympic" to describe the Pan-American competitions:

I note in some of your reports and literature that the word "Olympic" is still carelessly used in referring to the Pan-American Games, and I hope that you will find it possible to eliminate the misuse of the word "Olympic" and its derivatives which is confusing to everyone.⁸⁹

Although there was no legal protection of the word "olympic" until the 1950s, by 1941 the famous Helm's case had for some time exasperated Brundage.⁹⁰ While keeping a distance between the continental event and the Olympic Games in that respect, Brundage continually sought the organizational aspects of the Pan-American Games to correspond to the rules and structure of the Olympic Games. He kept the Argentinean Olympic Committee aware of every detail concerning the IOC updates in the eligibility criteria for participating in the Olympic Games, suggesting that those regulations should be adopted by the Pan-American Games' Organizing Committee. A participant, said Brundage, "must not be a teacher receiving remuneration for instruction in physical education or sport...This should be added on page 34"⁹¹ of the Pan-American Games' book of rules and regulations.

⁸⁹ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 24 November 1941, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁹⁰ By the 1930s, the world already viewed the Modern Olympic Movement as a phenomenon permeated with the glitz of advertising and marketing. The long confrontation between Helm's Bakeries of Los Angeles and Avery Brundage is well documented. For detailed information on that case, see: Robert K. Barney, Scott G. Martyn, Stephen R. Wenn, *Selling the Five Rings: The International Olympic Committee and the Rise of Olympic Commercialism* (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 2002).

⁹¹ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 24 November 1941, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

With the eruption of World War II and the formal cancellation of the Pan-American Games scheduled for 1942, what followed was not a complete hiatus in the preparations for the Games. However, plans and actions for inaugurating the competition slowed down compromising further advancements in Brundage's work as the President of PASO. The following chapter will explore Brundage's second term as president of the Pan-American Sports Organization and the efforts to keep the Pan-American Games idea alive and well.

Chapter 3

Operational challenges and political inclinations: bringing the Pan-American Games to life

Though the mail was slow and uncertain in the years between the cancellation of the 1942 Pan-American Games and the Second Pan-American Congress in 1948, it nevertheless allowed contacts that were important to keep Avery Brundage as the President of the Pan-American Sport Organization and to advance his ascendance to the IOC presidency. This chapter explores the context and main events leading up to the inauguration of the Pan-American Games during Brundage's second term as president of the hemispheric sport organization.

In general, during the first half of the 1940s, most correspondence between Brundage and members of the Pan-American Committee expressed regret at the war circumstances that prevented the inauguration of the Pan-American Games. Nevertheless, Brundage discretely admitted the impracticality of hosting the hemispheric event until conditions improved. While assertive on the irreplaceability of the Olympic Games, he advised the Pan-American Committee to keep their plans alive:

It is apparent that the Olympic Games will not be held in 1944. Let us hope that the world will return to sanity in time so that the Pan-American Games can be staged before 1947 since if they cannot, it will then be wise to postpone them until after the Olympic Games of 1948 in my opinion. In the meantime, I think they should be postponed one year at a time and the various countries which are members of the Comité Deportivo Panamericano should be notified, as you have been doing, in order that they may realize that the Comité Olímpico Argentino is merely marking time and is prepared to proceed when peace returns.¹

¹ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 26 August 1943, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

It seemed important to preserve the interest in the project in all the countries of the three Americas and to keep the Pan-American Organizing Committee active and ready to proceed. However, when conditions finally permitted, the continental Games were not Brundage's priority.

On 9 November 1945 Brundage, attempting to greet Palacios in Spanish, reported that he had attended the IOC Executive Committee meeting in which a decision was made to proceed with the 1948 Olympic Games:

Dear Doctor Palacios:

Mucho Gracias for sending me the first six copies of the CADCOA bulletin...While in Europe I attended a meeting of the Executive Committee of the International Olympic Committee. As you no doubt know, it was decided to proceed with the 1948 Olympics and a vote by mail is being taken to decide the venue. The probability is that London, England or Lausanne, Switzerland, will be favored.²

In that same letter Brundage acknowledged to Palacios that, upon his return to the U.S., the American Olympic Committee had an informal meeting at which officials discussed issues concerning the organization of the Pan-American Games. Based on the debates at that meeting, Brundage expressed his opinion that it would be "difficult to organize the (Pan-American) Games in 1946 and that, therefore, they could not be held until 1950."³ However, correspondence between Brundage and Joaquín Serratosa Cibils (Uruguayan IOC member since 1937 and member of the Pan-American Committee) demonstrates that Brundage had at least a second perspective on that matter. Cibils wrote on 26 November 1946:

I would like to have your opinion on whether it will be possible to organize and stage Pan-American Games successfully before the

² The *Confederación Argentina de Deportes* and the *Comité Olímpico Argentino* were unified in 1927. The combined Spanish acronym for the institution became known as CADCOA. See Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 9 November 1945, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

³ Ibid. Parentheses mine.

Olympic Games, which, as you know, will be held in 1948. Your views on this subject will be appreciated.⁴

Brundage's response indicates that the timeline to organize the Pan-American Games was not the only obstacle. For Brundage, it was necessary to preserve the hierarchy between the two events:

Regarding the carrying out of the Pan-American Games before the Olympic Games, I must say that my personal opinion is quite contrary to such a step. I must offer the maximum of publicity, importance and hierarchy to the Games planned for 1948, which with God's help, are to take place in London.⁵

In 1946 Brundage and Palacios corresponded about the possibility of arranging the Second Pan-American Congress in Barranquilla, during the Vth Central American and Caribbean Games in that year, which did not happen because the two did not agree on the matter in time. Later, they conversed about scheduling the Congress to happen during the IInd Bolivarian Games, held between 25 December 1947 and 8 January 1948 in Lima, Peru. Ultimately, delayed mail responses and costs considered, Palacios suggested holding the Ist Congress during the 1948 Olympics in London, which Brundage agreed. At that point, they also agreed to host the Ist Pan-American Games in 1951 to avoid conflict with the VIth Central American and Caribbean Games.⁶

As previously mentioned, the IInd Pan-American Congress took place in London, where Avery Brundage was confirmed as the president of the Pan-American Committee. Twenty-five delegates from twelve countries of the Americas participated in the Congress. On that occasion, Brundage's "high authority as vice-president of the Olympics International Committee"⁷ was

⁴ Joaquín Serratosa Cibils to Avery Brundage, 26 November 1945, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁵ Avery Brundage to Joaquín Serratosa Cibils, 24 December 1945, ABC, Box 202, Reel 116.

⁶ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 14 March 1947, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

⁷ Record of the General Assembly of delegates to the Second Pan-American Congress, 8 August 1948, p.2, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

emphasized in the records of the General Assembly. The American's new position within the IOC contributed to increase his prestige within the Latin American organization. For reelecting Brundage as president of the Permanent Commission of the Pan-American Games "in view of the efficient work"⁸ that he carried out, the members of that Congress overlooked a previous disposition of the earlier Pan-American Congress, which forbid the reelection of a representative. Brundage was then reelected unanimously as president of the Pan-American Committee for a new term: 1948-1955.

It is widely known that the WWII context and its political outcome made international sports contests increasingly attractive to national governments. Observant of the political implications of sports, many countries in the world asserted direct governmental control over their National Olympic Committees and other sport organizations. This was also the case of some Latin American governments, which often appointed their cronies as ministers of sports.⁹

For decades, Brundage used politics as the dark background against which to protect the world of amateur sports. Evidently, he fretted about the tendency of implicating governments in sport matters and, as early as 1943, he alerted sport authorities to the risks of that tendency to the Pan-American project: "mixtures of politics and sports in various Latin American countries will probably lead to considerable trouble when Pan-American sport develops."¹⁰

Although the international sport literature gives little attention to the Latin American scenario related to the post-World War II period, it is important to

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Brazil, for instance, established a National Council of Sports in 1941 and placed the council directly under the Minister of Education and Public Health. On 31 March 1944 Brundage sent a letter to *Confederação Brasileira de Desportos* expressing his concern about that matter. See Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p.135.

¹⁰ See Brundage to L. di Bennedetto, 31 August 1943, ABC, Box 23.

mention that, in the course of time, Latin Americans throughout Central and South America came through the control of military and dictatorial regimes that placed sports directly under the aegis of governments. It was within that context that the Pan-American Games materialized and developed. Predictably, Brundage found himself engaged in an “apparently endless dispute with Latin American governments which routinely allowed the ministers of education or of sports to name the president of the National Olympic Committee or, at times, even to occupy the post themselves.”¹¹ At the IOC Executive Board meeting in Lausanne in 1949, Brundage expressed his concerns related to the “intrusions of the military and of governments in South and Central America.”¹²

The following section explores the implications of the political environment in Argentina for the inauguration of the Pan-American Games. The importance of the inaugural Games “to showcase the New Argentina”¹³ of president Juan Domingo Perón has been generally summarized. However, what has not been made explicit and examined in detail are the specific actions, interventions, and interactions that characterized Brundage’s position before those events.

¹¹ Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, p.135.

¹² *Procés-Verbale*, 21 April 1949, ABC, Box 76, University of Illinois Archives as cited in Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, p.135.

¹³ Cesar Torres, “Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy,” in *Diplomatic Games: Sport, Statecraft, and International Relations since 1945*, edited by Heather Dichter and Andrew Johns (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014), pp.151-182.

Brundage, Peronism, and the preparations for the First Pan-American Games

In the 1940s Argentina (the soon-to-be birthplace of the Pan-American Games) underwent significant political changes which affected sport policies in the country. Based on official documents, international media coverage, and a vast bibliography, Torres' work¹⁴ on this era provides a rich analysis of the ways by which the movement known as Peronism used different forms of involvement in international sport as a diplomatic tool to promote a New Argentina. Torres' analysis, in concert with the primary sources gathered for this study, prompts an examination of Brundage's perspective, interactions and interventions as President of the Pan-American Committee in the years leading up to the inauguration of the continental event in Peronist Argentina.

On 4 June 1943 a nationalist coup d'état ended the government of Ramón Castillo, who had presided over a decade of oligarchic rule in Argentina.¹⁵ In that context, Colonel Juan Domingo Perón gradually became a prominent official in the new military government. He gathered support from labor leaders and the working class. Meanwhile, public opinion and political parties continually pressured the army to hold free presidential elections in Argentina. Cognizant of Perón's political rise but distrustful of his popularity, the army maneuvered to force Perón to resign and arrested him before the elections. However, thousands of Perón's supporters protested and demanded his release. The military government complied. Perón became a candidate in

¹⁴ Torres, *Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy*, p.152.

¹⁵ Ramón S. Castillo Barrionuevo was a conservative Argentine politician who served as President of Argentina from June 27, 1942 to June 4, 1943. From 1938 to 1942, Castillo was vice-president of Argentina under President Roberto Ortiz. For more information, see: Fernando Sabsay, *Presidencias y presidentes constitucionales argentinos* (Buenos Aires: Biblioteca Nacional, 1999).

the free presidential elections that occurred in 1946. Supported by the unions and the working class, he was elected, staying in power for almost a decade.

Castillo and Perón had different approaches towards sport policies in Argentina. While the former's government was largely supportive of organized sport controlled by civil society, the latter president made it a prominent subject of concern for the state within the broader nationalist and populist regime that he established.¹⁶ In fact, Perón viewed sport as a versatile tool that could be used domestically and internationally to advance political and diplomatic goals. Besides, the president's wife, Eva Perón, fully supported and actively participated in sport projects. She played an active and major role in her husband's public life. Overall, the Peronist state, argues Torres, "guaranteed the masses broad access to sport" and "gave unprecedented support to elite sport."¹⁷

It is important to remember that in the 1940s the relationship between Argentina and the United States was troubled. As previously mentioned, Argentina's neutrality during the early part of World War II created a tense diplomatic atmosphere between the two countries which persisted for a long time after Argentina declared war against the Axis in March 1945, scarcely two months before the end of the war in Europe. With the governance change in Argentina, the foreign policies in the country shifted from Castillo's pro-Axis tendencies to Perón's anti-imperialist but soothing discourse towards the view of an anti-hegemonic world. In a world divided by the Cold War, a conflict that pitted the United States against the Soviet Union, Perón's foreign policy

¹⁶ Torres, *Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy*, p.152.

¹⁷ Ibid.

became known as the “third position.”¹⁸ The Argentinean President sought to advance an independent foreign policy by emphasizing that his country was friendly to all the countries in the world. As part of the policy, Perón restored diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union (severed since 1918) and, simultaneously, advocated for continental unity.¹⁹

The policies of the new regime dramatically changed the environment for the inauguration of the Pan-American Games. And, as one could expect, over the course of time, modifications of the leadership of the sport administrative bodies in Argentina occurred.

In the beginning of the Pan-American plans (1939 to 1947), Brundage mainly corresponded with Juan Carlos Palacios regarding the inauguration of hemispheric Games in Buenos Aires. The Argentinean and the American created a cordial and friendly relationship, exchanging not only letters that dealt with plans to host the Pan-American Games but Christmas’ wishes. In several letters, they greeted each other with an amiable “Dear friend.”

As early as 1945 Brundage demonstrated awareness of the political changes and environment in Argentina. He communicated with Palacios:

I have not heard from you for several months but I have assumed that political disturbances in the Argentine may have affected your plans. It is probable that the political unrest in the various Latin American countries may have led to the opinions expressed at our Olympic meeting where it was suggested that it would not be possible to organize the Pan-American Games at an early date.²⁰

¹⁸ Ibid, p.158.

¹⁹ There is a vast literature on Peronism. See, for example: Emilio de Ípola, “Ruptura y continuidad: Claves parciales para un balance de las interpretaciones del Peronism,” *Desarrollo Económico* 29, no. 115 (1989): 331-59; Cristián Buchrucker, “Interpretations of Peronism: Old Frameworks and New Perspectives.” In James P. Brennan (ed.), *Peronism and Argentina* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Books, 1998), pp.-3-28.

²⁰ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, ABC, 9 November 1945, Box 202, Reel 117.

In September 1947 Juan Carlos Palacios, after serving two terms as president of CADCOA, resigned from the position.²¹ Although Torres mentioned that Perón, over the course of his presidency, secured ways to control sports by appointing political cronies in sport federations and organizations. Torres speculated whether Palacios was pressured to resign or not. The fact is that Brundage, in his new term as president of PASO, had to adjust the conversation regarding the organization of the Pan-American Games with Palacio's two different successors before the event was finally inaugurated: Ricardo Sánchez de Bustamante (1947-1948) and Rodolfo G. Valenzuela (1948-1955). The former was an engineer who had served as vice-president of CADCOA until Palacio's resignation. The latter was president of the Argentine Supreme Court and a devoted Peronist.

Ricardo Bustamante served as president of CADCOA for less than one year. During this short term, even before Buenos Aires was ratified as the host city of the First Pan-American Games, the Argentine Olympic Committee announced the interest in organizing the 1956 Olympic Games in the capital city of the country.²² At that point, Perón had been in office for a year and a half, but hosting international sport events was already part of his government's agenda. CADCOA's justification to collect votes for the city of Buenos Aires included the fact that the Games had never been celebrated in Latin America. The bid also emphasized that hosting the 1956 Olympics in Argentina would satisfy the "legitimate aspirations of the government of his Excellency the president Juan D.

²¹ Palacios was president of CADCOA in 1927-1928 and then again from 1932-1933. See Argentina and Olympism, *Olympic Review*, no. 87-88, January-February, 1975, pp.23-35.

²² Although there were previous efforts to host the Olympics in Argentina, Torres documented that the 1956 attempt was the first full bid submitted to the IOC. See Cesar R. Torres, "Stymied Expectations Buenos Aires' Persistent Efforts to Host Olympic Games," *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 16 (2007): 47-75.

Perón and that of the athletes of the continent.”²³ On 20 January 1948 Bustamante wrote a ten-page letter to Sigfrid Edström detailing the rationale for Buenos Aires’ bid. In the meantime, Argentinean athletes embarked to the London 1948 Olympic Games, with the full support and encouragement of Perón’s government.

The Argentinean bid was supported by the IOC members from the country, Ricardo C. Aldao and Horacio Bustos Morón. In the candidacy book, Perón and the city’s mayor also expressed their support for the bid. In December 1948 IOC member Aldao, despite supporting Buenos Aires’ candidature to host the 1956 Olympics, alerted the IOC president that Perón supervised all sport matters in Argentina.²⁴ In the end, the aspirations of the Argentine Olympic Committee to host the Olympics did not materialize. In 1949, in the fourth round by a vote of 21-20, Melbourne beat Buenos Aires to be the host of the 1956 Olympics.²⁵ Nevertheless, plans to host the hemispheric event and other international sport events continued.

The divergences between the Peronist regime’s use of sport and the IOC principles became increasingly evident. Ricardo Bustamante and two other delegates²⁶ from Peronist Argentina attended the Second Pan-American Congress on 8 August 1948 while Brundage reiterated his concerns regarding the mixing of politic with sports. The American exposed the “perils that politics

²³ Ricardo S. de Bustamante and Emilio S. Delpech to Sigfrid Edström, 31 January 1948, Correspondence Generale, 1947-1949, *International Olympic Committee Archives* quoted in Cesar Torres, “Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy,” in *Diplomatic Games: Sport, Statecraft, and International Relations since 1945*, edited by Heather Dichter and Andrew Johns (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014), p.164.

²⁴ See Torres, *A persistent desire*, p.402.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Two other Argentinean representatives were present at the Congress: José Oriani and Emilio S. Delpech.

holds for amateur sports, as well as for the International Olympic Movement.”²⁷ He argued that “politics should be removed from sports”²⁸ because political concepts “drag the youth to a perilous ground for them as politics have no other end than the CONTROL and POWER over the sportsman, which is entirely beyond Olympics ideal.”²⁹ Brundage’s thoughts on that matter proved to be antagonistic to the way in which Perón envisioned athletes as: “the best ambassadors” of the country.³⁰ In another words, under the Peronist regime, the athletes were seen as important agents projecting a positive image of Argentina abroad.

Brundage had difficulties in contacting Bustamante. The only correspondence between the two found in the archival material gathered for this study occurred when the latter had already resigned from CADCOA. On 23 February 1949 Brundage wrote to CADCOA inquiring about progress made by the organizing committee for the Pan-American Games. He attached a copy of the Minutes of the Second Pan-American Sports Congress. In response, the IOC vice-president received a letter from Emilio S. Delpech, secretary of CADCOA, dated 2 March 1949:

Dear Mr. President,

With regard to the progress of the preparatory work, I must tell you, for your information, that at the present time our organization is approaching a total renewal of its authorities, and that as soon as they start functioning, the plans of organization for the Games will be fully considered, and we hope they will meet the desired success. I must inform you that our new president is Doctor Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, who

²⁷ Record of the General Assembly of Delegates to the Second Pan-American Congress celebrated in London, 8 August 1948, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid. Capitalized words in original.

³⁰ Torres, *Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy*, p.167

replaces the Engineer R. Sanchez de Bustamante, who has completed his term.³¹

Aware of the changes in the Argentine Olympic Committee, Brundage demonstrated a continuing interest in accompanying the progress of CADCOA in the organization of the Pan-American Games.

In June he wrote to the *Confederación Argentina de Deportes* to ask what was being done:

Gentlemen:

Less than two years remain and I assume that much of the preliminary work has already been finished, although I have no news from CADCOA. Arranging for a great international event of this magnitude is a tremendous task. Since these will be the first Western Hemisphere Games ever held, no effort must be spared to make them a great success. For nine years, ever since the First Pan-American Sports Congress in Buenos Aires in 1940, I have, as you know, spent considerable time and effort in publicizing and promoting this event. I know firsthand the great enthusiasm for these Games that existed in Buenos Aires in 1940 and I am certain that anything prepared by the Argentine will be well organized, but I should like to know something about your plans. Many inquiries are being received from various countries and I should have detailed information so that they can be answered.³²

On 24 June 1949 Brundage also wrote to Palacios (his long-time solid and reliable connection in Argentina) seeking for information relative to the preparations for the event:

Dear Dr.Palacios:

It is a long time since I have heard from you and I trust that you have not severed your connections with amateur sport. Please be good enough to note the enclosed copy of a letter that I have just sent to Cadcoa. The fact that nothing has been heard about the preparations for these Games is somewhat disturbing. Can you give me any confidential

³¹ Emilio S. Delpech to Avery Brundage, 2 March 1949, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

³² Avery Brundage to *Confederación Argentina de Deportes*, 24 June 1949, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

information on the subject? I hope this finds you in the best of health and spirits and that we shall meet in 1951 if not before.³³

Though no response from Palacios is found in the Avery Brundage Collection, Brundage's inquiries finally reached Bustamante, who apologized for the delayed response. The Argentinean engineer, no longer in office, was courteous enough to provide information to Brundage about preparations for the Pan-American Games. On 15 July 1949 Bustamante wrote:

Dear Mr. Brundage:

Since my return from London, more than once I wanted to write to you, but I have been so busy that I have not been able to find the necessary time and tranquility to talk with you. Along with this, I withdrew from the Presidency of the [Argentinean] Olympic Committee, after having devoted to Argentine Sports over thirty years of administrative activity. Do you not think that I have a right to rest? To all the above, there was added the almost absolute inactivity of the Committee. Only now it is starting to work actively in the organization of the first Pan-American Games.³⁴

Bustamante's letter gave an indication to Brundage of what to expect from Dr.

Rodolfo G. Valenzuela as the new president of CADCOA:

My successor, Dr. Valenzuela, is very closely connected to high official circles, and I do not doubt that he will obtain all of the necessary official support to assure the success of the coming games.³⁵

By pointing out that the continental Games would enjoy support from "high official circles," Bustamante demonstrated confidence that the Pan-American Games would materialize. While acknowledging that the city of Buenos Aires had enough sport facilities, Bustamante did not ignore the challenges ahead of the Organizing Committee:

Fortunately, the city of Buenos Aires has several stadiums with a large capacity, which will greatly facilitate the competitions to be held in

³³ Avery Brundage to Juan Carlos Palacios, 24 June 1949, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

³⁴ Ricardo Sanchez de Bustamante to Avery Brundage, 15 July 1949, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

³⁵ Ibid.

February, 1951. The problem of lodging the athletes is perhaps the greatest worry, but I count on it being solved satisfactorily.³⁶

In a letter addressed to Brundage dated a few days earlier than Bustamante's, Dr. Valenzuela finally introduced himself as the new president of CADCOA and provided information on the plans of the institution:

I inform you that the present authorities in charge of the destinies of this organization [CADCOA], over which I have the honor of presiding, are making a careful study of everything relating to the organization of these Games. We are aware of the arduous nature of the task and we are willing to save no effort for its successful accomplishment; however, we are quite sure that the plans we are preparing can be carried out... Therefore, I expect that in my next communication, which will be sent very soon, to have the pleasure of informing you what has been decided about this matter."³⁷

Though clamoring for information, Brundage continued to provide support relative to the organization of the Pan-American Games scheduled for February 1951 in Buenos Aires. Attentive to the realization of the VIth Central American and Caribbean Games³⁸ scheduled for Guatemala in February 1950, Brundage communicated with the Argentine Olympic Committee:

Gentlemen:

Last June you were kind enough to write to me about the First Pan-American Games scheduled for Buenos Aires in 1951. While you stated you expected to send me more definite information soon, I have heard nothing further.

The VI Juegos Deportivos Centroamericanos y del Caribe will be held in Guatemala City next February. There will be gathered together there at that time the representatives of fifteen or twenty different countries

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Rodolfo G. Valenzuela to Avery Brundage, 6 July 1949, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

³⁸ Brundage went to Guatemala himself in November 1949. He was appointed as the Chairman of an investigative commission responsible for examining the situation about conflicts in the Guatemalan sport leadership, inspecting the constructions for the Central American and Caribbean Games, and verifying certain activities that endangered the athletes' amateur status, and questionable motives and ethics of some of the Olympic and Coordinating Committee members. In general, the Commission was critical of the sport facilities, but expressed confidence in the leadership of the National Olympic Committee and the Organizing Committee, calling for renewed efforts and cooperation for the timely completion of all preparations. See Richard V. McGehee, "Revolution, Democracy, and Sport: The Guatemalan 'Olympics' of 1950," *OLYMPIKA: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 3 (1994): 49-81.

eligible to participate in the Pan American Games. If information is available here and there, a great deal of work that will contribute to the success of the Pan American Games. In my opinion it would be advisable for you to have someone that is fully conversant with the Pan American Games program and who can speak with authority present during these Central American Games. It would save much correspondence and would stimulate interest and pave the way for a larger and more representative participation.³⁹

The Argentine Olympic Committee responded that the institution agreed with Brundage's suggestion and, thus, a delegation was being prepared to go to Guatemala with the purpose of stimulating interest in the Pan-American Games. On 18 November 1949, Valenzuela wrote to Brundage to announce the good news that the Argentine Government guaranteed full support for the realization of the first Pan-American Games in Buenos Aires. The president of CADCOA emphasized the "exceptional" expectations of the Argentinean people for celebrating the Games "in view of the certainty that the great event will have as its primordial results the sisterhood of the American peoples."⁴⁰ Valenzuela added that all the national sport organizations were cooperating to make a successful event, which he emphasized "will be under the high auspices of the Government of the Nation."⁴¹ Valenzuela also requested Brundage's support as President of the Permanent Commission to assure the presence of representative teams from every country of the Americas. While securing the full cooperation of the Argentinean Government, the CADCOA president enclosed a copy of a national resolution to Brundage, which read:

The sports events, when held within the ethical standards that are their essence, "at the same time that they exalt the love of the Fatherland, they contribute to strengthen the bonds of friendship, of understanding

³⁹ Avery Brundage to *Comite Olimpico Argentino*, 24 October 1949, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

⁴⁰ Rodolfo G. Valenzuela to Avery Brundage, 18 November 1949, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

⁴¹ Ibid.

and affection between the peoples,” as the President of the Nation General Juan D. Peron so ably put it...

The practice of sports is an essential factor for the physical and moral building of strong peoples and an external projection of the vigor and strength of their sons. Section I, Chapter IV, article 37 of the National Constitution, makes express reference to the “development of the physical vigor of the youths” as a fundamental aspect of education. The holding of sport competitions gives a desire to win on the part of those who aspire to participate in them, generating an ample and constant movement, which contributes to an improvement of attitude to the benefit of the physical and moral health of the race.⁴²

Such a resolution reflects the Peronist belief that sport had the potential for inspiring fraternity, cooperation, and “a moral sense of life.”⁴³ The New Argentina of Perón’s political vision urged the construction of healthy and strong men because the president believed that “tough peoples make great nations.”⁴⁴ Simultaneously, the political tone of hosting international competitions was explicit. Writing to Brundage on 21 November 1949, Rodolfo G. Valenzuela emphasized: “Both people and Government are assuming a national obligation, and they will be able to justify the honor that has been conferred to them by the sister nations of America.”⁴⁵

During the 1950s Brundage continued to supervise CADCOA’s actions and plans. However, he ignored issues related to the political undertones that surrounded the preparations of the Pan-American Games. Brundage provided operational help to the members of the Argentine Olympic Committee by preparing lists of contacts from all the NOCs that adhered to the Pan-American Sports Organization, and used his influence to reinforce invitations to the countries of the three Americas. However, the pace of Argentinean progress

⁴² First Pan-American Sports Games. Resolution No.1, Buenos Aires, 14 November 1949, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

⁴³ Torres, *Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy*, p.157.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.156.

⁴⁵ Rodolfo G. Valenzuela to Avery Brundage, 21 November 1949, ABC, Box 202, Reel 117.

seemed to worry him. On 22 June 1950 Brundage wrote to CADCOA complaining that “no information of any kind”⁴⁶ reached him since the year before, and that he had “no notice of publicity of any kind concerning the Games in the United States.”⁴⁷ Brundage warned that there was a great deal of work to be carried out, and reminded the Argentineans that there was only eight months left until the planned inauguration of the Pan-American Games:

Gentlemen:

I trust that your preparations are well under way and that you can give us the complete list of events, the time they will take place and where, as well as information on housing, transportation, etc. Many people seem to be doubtful that the Games will be held. If there is any question we should know about it at once since we will cease our efforts if the Games are not going to be held. Please, be good enough to let me hear from you as soon as possible.⁴⁸

Brundage’s once soft and nostalgic turned into an explicit demonstration of discontent. It is worth noticing that Brundage’s impersonal correspondence with the renewed CADCOA (always addressing the letters to “Gentlemen”) completely differed from the friendly letters that he exchanged with Palacios. Almost a month later, on 11 July 1950, Brundage acknowledged to CADCOA that members of the United States Olympic Committee had received a formal invitation to participate in the First Pan-American Games. He confirmed that the USOC expected to send a full team with representation in each sport on the program depending on how successful the campaign to raise the necessary funds would be. Nevertheless, Brundage was not satisfied with that. He insisted on receiving more detailed information relative to the Games:

We would like to know when and where the different events will be held. We should like to have the schedule for preliminaries and semi-finals. Are the standard Olympic rules and regulations to be used? What

⁴⁶ Avery Brundage to Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, 22 June 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Avery Brundage to Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, 22 June 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

arrangements have you made for the housing and feeding of the teams? What sort of local transportation will be provided? Where will the officials be housed? In fact, we need full and complete details on the entire program.⁴⁹

Valenzuela responded on 28 July 1950, answering point by point each of Brundage's inquiries. He informed Brundage that a copy of the General Rules and of the General Program had been sent, simultaneously, to all the expected participant countries. In most of the operational and logistic points, Valenzuela informed that his committee was making a careful study of each case (dates, places, housing and meals), and that he expected, within a short time, to send all the answers to Brundage. In regard to the Olympic rules, the CADCOA president said: "the rules are the ones suitable for the above-mentioned Pan-American Games, which differ little from the Olympic Rules."⁵⁰ Again, the "valued and definite support of the President of the nation, General Juan D. Perón, and of his wife, Eva Perón,"⁵¹ was emphasized.

Though concerned with the logistics of the preparations, Brundage did not lose sight of the purpose of celebrating the Pan-American Games. Having received a list of countries that had been sent invitations to participate in the First Pan-American Games (which was meant to promote and advance amateur sport), Brundage tried to ensure that the colonies of America would go to Buenos Aires for the competitions. He wrote:

Gentlemen:

In your list of countries that have been sent invitations to participate in the First Pan-American Games, I notice that you have included none of the colonies of the Western Hemisphere. Many of these colonies are active in amateur sport and have participated in Olympic and Central American Games. I think you should send invitations to Puerto Rico,

⁴⁹ Avery Brundage to Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, 11 July 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁵⁰ Rodolfo G. Valenzuela to Avery Brundage, 28 July 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana, Curacao and any other that might want to participate.⁵²

Brundage's concerns and apprehension regarding the progress of CADCOA in the organization of the Pan-American Games did not, however, induce him to travel to Buenos Aires to look over the situation himself. However, he sent a delegate named Gabriel Reiner,⁵³ who spent two weeks in Buenos Aires to examine the scenario of the First Pan-American Games. On 7 September 1950 Reiner wrote:

I pointed out to Dr. Valenzuela and all the other Argentine officials that my mission to them is unofficial. They did not care. They were very appreciate of the fact that USOC suggested that I find out about the progress of P.A Games. They claim that, so far, I was the first one to be entrusted with any kind of a mission (official or unofficial) and they deemed it a great honor.⁵⁴

Reiner reported that the Argentineans continually asked for his personal opinion about the organization of the Games (as he alleged that he did not want nor did have the authority to speak for the USOC). Using Valenzuela's official car, which he said that he reluctantly did, Reiner visited the stadium and the housing amenities. Reiner informed Brundage that he was impressed by the facilities he visited in Argentina. Based on his experience, Reiner said that he identified "certain problems which should be solved and which would facilitate the work of the USOC."⁵⁵ In the report, a tacit message was extended to Brundage: "The Argentine officials are very eager to secure your help in making sure that all

⁵² Avery Brundage to Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, 21 August 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁵³ A handwritten report signed by Gabriel Reiner is found in the Avery Brundage Collection. I was not able to find any information about Reiner's status within sport organizations in the U.S. The clues found in the report made it possible to identify him as an American lawyer with previous experience with sports or sport organizations. Reiner wrote his report to Avery Brundage in sealed papers from the Gran Hotel Bolivar, which is located in Lima, Peru, which proves that his trip to South America was not only for the purpose of checking the progress of the Pan-American Games preparations in Argentina.

⁵⁴ Gabriel Reiner to Avery Brundage, 7 September 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117. Underlined by Reiner.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

American countries will participate. They feel that you are the only one in the Americas who commands respect and attention.”⁵⁶

Problems related to passports and the issuing of identification cards, a problem of two Mexican sport organizations claiming authority,⁵⁷ the uncertain participation of the Canadians,⁵⁸ and the invitation of colonies were noted in the report, with the overall conclusion that CADCOA was expecting for Brundage's advice. With respect to the participation of the colonies, Brundage insisted in a later correspondence that it was advisable to allow those countries to participate and that, as president of the Permanent Pan-American Commission, he “authorized” CADCOA to invite them.⁵⁹ CADCOA later confirmed that invitations were sent to the colonies.

Although no document is found in the Avery Brundage Collection to make explicit what directions Brundage gave to Reiner, the fact is that the visit served to provide Brundage a firsthand impression of president Perón, Rodolfo Valenzuela, and the political climate in the South American country. Wrote Reiner to Brundage:

I got along very well with all Argentine officials. They were especially pleased that I could converse with them in Spanish and that I could speak some Argentine slang (very bad language). I got to know Dr. Valenzuela very well. He is a lawyer and he was glad that I am one as well. Dr. Valenzuela is a Judge of the Supreme Court of Argentina...He is a very close friend of President Perón and his wife. As you know, Dr. Valenzuela was a member of Argentina Olympic Fencing team. President Perón was chosen for Argentina Olympic Team in 1924 but

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ In Latin America two organizations claimed control over sport issues in some countries. They worked harmoniously in some cases but, sometimes, there was rivalry. CADCOA had to determine to which organizations they should send invitations.

⁵⁸ In the end, Canada did not participate in the first Pan-American Games. The alleged reason is that the country sent a large delegation to the British Empire Games, which were held in New Zealand a few months earlier than the inaugural Pan-American Games, and could not prepare and raise funds to send a team to Argentina. See Avery Brundage to Rodolfo Valenzuela, 6 February 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁵⁹ Avery Brundage to Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, 29 September 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

could not participate due to his military duties. Presiden Perón is also an excellent skier. The political picture is quite complex for an American to understand. I did my best to orient myself and should be glad to give you my findings, should you be interested.⁶⁰

I could not find further correspondence between Gabriel Reiner and Avery Brundage. Following the unofficial visit, Valenzuela wrote to Brundage reassuring that CADCOA, "Perón, and his worthy wife Mrs. Eva Perón, shall make the greatest effort"⁶¹ to host a successful event.

Brundage's next letter to Valenzuela was dated 18 October 1950.⁶² The IOC vice-president apologized for not "having too much time to devote to Pan-American affairs" because he had made two trips to Europe in the last six months. Brundage thanked Valenzuela for the hospitality that he had given to Gabriel Reiner. Also, he acknowledged that he received two CADCOA's representatives in the U.S. to discuss various problems connected with the First Pan-American Games, and made recommendations for the organization of the IIIrd Congress, improving publicity, and other issues. Reiner's unofficial mission and the visits of two CADACOA's representatives to the U.S. seem to have calmed Brundage's worries. Expressing the IOC interest in the success of the event, he took the time to reiterate the idealist role of the continental Games:

On behalf of sportsmen of the Western Hemisphere I send you thanks for your assumption of the vast and complicated task of organizing these Juegos Deportivos Panamericanos, which we hope will be the first of a long line for the promotion of fair play, friendship, and good will.⁶³

The correspondence analyzed in this study provides proof that Brundage was aware of the considerable energy of Argentina's National Government in all aspects related to the preparations of the Pan-American Games, but he gave

⁶⁰ Gabriel Rein to Avery Brundage, 7 September 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁶¹ Rodolfo G. Valenzuela to Avery Brundage, 4 October 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁶² Avery Brundage to Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, 18 October 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117, p.1.

⁶³ Ibid., p.3.

no demonstration that he was troubled by that. Nevertheless, the intrusion of politics into the organization of the Pan-American did not pass fully unnoticed. The Peruvian IOC member Alfredo Benavides wrote a formal complaint to Avery Brundage exposing what he believed was a “change in the character”⁶⁴ of the event.

Benavides’ letter is an interesting document and, apparently, that was the second communication in which he brought attention to this issue to Brundage.⁶⁵ Benavides declared his belief that the Pan-American Games could be “a brilliant opportunity for making known the principles and purposes of the Olympic Games.”⁶⁶ Nevertheless, he wrote, the Pan-American Games were “deviating from their Olympic origin and nature”⁶⁷ due to “excessive intervention of the government in sport matters, and more than anything, to ignorance.”⁶⁸

The points raised by the Peruvian IOC member converged with Brundage’s entrenched aversion to the mixing of politics and sports. Benavides wrote a list of suggestions to Brundage, including that the problem should be brought to the attention of Horacio Bustos Morón (Argentinean IOC member), so the latter could make sure that preparations for the Pan-American Games were “in accordance with the Olympic rules and protocols.”⁶⁹ Following Benavides’ suggestion, Brundage wrote to the Argentinean IOC member⁷⁰ ambiguously citing a letter received from a colleague:

These first Pan-American Games were given to Buenos Aires by the IOC and, therefore, in carrying them out they should be subject to the

⁶⁴ Alfredo Benavides to Avery Brundage, 30 October 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁶⁵ In the document I accessed from the ABC collection, Benavides refers to a letter that he submitted to Brundage earlier than the one dated 30 October 1950. However, I could not find a copy of that previous letter.

⁶⁶ Alfredo Benavides to Avery Brundage, 30 October 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Brundage indicated that the letter was copied to the Cuban IOC member, Dr. Miguel Moenck.

principles, practices and rules of the Olympics. . . . I know that it is very difficult in these countries to avoid the intervention of official circles in any public matters, and that the neglect of the National Olympic Committee in matters which are incumbent upon it, is due more to ignorance than to anything else. . . . If you feel that my above observations are correct, I believe that you, in your capacity as President of our subcommittee, could recommend to our colleague, Bustos Moron, that, with the sagacity and skill which distinguish him, he should try to see that the preparations and organization of the coming Pan-American Games are in accordance with the Olympic rules and protocols. I believe that, as representatives of the IOC on this continent, it is up to us to try to route these matters suitably.⁷¹

The President of the Pan-American Committee refrained from making comments regarding the contents of the letter, nor could he identify the author of that document. But Brundage signaled that the subject should be discussed during the IIIrd Pan-American Sport Congress in Buenos Aires. Horacio Bustos Morón replied on 18 November 1950. Bustos Morón stated that there were several mistakes in the letter authored by their colleague (whose identity Morón did not know):

In the first place, I do not think it was the IOC who gave the first Pan-American Games to Buenos Aires, because the IOC officially has nothing to do with these games. . . . I can assure you that up to now the preparation and organization of the first Pan-American Games are being handled by the Argentine Olympic Committee, presided over by Dr. Valenzuela.⁷²

It is obvious that the question of patronizing relationships between the IOC and regional or continental Games was not widely clear. Bustos Morón deconstructed the first argument from Benavides' letter, which subjugated the Pan-American Games to the principles, practices and rules of the Olympic Games. The Argentinean IOC member hinted that, foremost, the Pan-American Committee was an autonomous institution. That point could have represented a personal conflict of interest for Avery Brundage due to his positions as president

⁷¹ Avery Brundage to Horacio Bustos Morón, 2 November 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁷² Horacio Bustos Morón to Avery Brundage, 18 November 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

of both the Pan-American Committee and vice-president of the IOC. However, despite the ideological aspirations related to the principle of amateurism that he had embedded in the Pan-American Games, Brundage had previously agreed to the autonomous character of the Pan-American Committee (see Chapter 2). Brundage agreed that the hemispheric institution should not yield sovereignty to any other organization, and that the Olympic rules and regulations of the International Federations would be adopted in the Pan-American Games because of convenience (they were in common use in several countries).

In his response, Bustos Morón was more specific when dealing with the issue of political interference in the organization of the continental sport event:

All work is being done in the official premises of the “Confederación Argentina de Deportes – Comité Olímpico Argentino,” but I do not conceal the fact that the organization is being carried out with the moral and financial support of the Government, and in my opinion this is not criticizable, because it is only logical that official circles should encourage sporting activities with a view to their development and progress...The President of this country has declared, in a speech which was published in the local press, that in so far as the requirements of the Pan-American Games are concerned, things will be done in accordance with what the Argentine Olympic Committee says should be done.⁷³

Furthermore, Bustos Morón explained, no Olympic Committee of the American countries was in a position to organize the Pan-American Games with their own funds exclusively. Thus, if NOCs could not accept financial aid from their governments, one must arrive at the conclusion that “the Games, under those conditions, could only be held in the United States.”⁷⁴ Then, the Argentinean IOC member, preventing possible accusations that could endanger the credibility of his opinion because of his nationality, guaranteed that his

⁷³ Horacio Bustos Morón to Avery Brundage, 18 November 1950, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p.2.

perspective on the issue was “entirely impartial.”⁷⁵ As an IOC member, he said, “I maintain complete independence both as regards the authorities and as regards of the Argentine Olympic Committee.”⁷⁶

On 22 January 1951 Brundage responded Bustos Morón. He explained to Bustos Morón that he had been in the East (New York) attending to meetings of the Amateur Athletic Union and the United States Olympic Committee.

You are quite right that, while the Pan-American Games are under the patronage of the IOC, the final authority and control is vested in the Pan-American sport Committee, which will hold its III Congress in Buenos Aires during the Games. Attention will be given to the different problems of amateur sport in the Western Hemisphere at this congress, as well as at the meeting of IOC members.⁷⁷

In addition, he reported that the USOC was working hard to raise the money required to send the American team to Buenos Aires. Although Brundage had clear signs of the government’s direct participation in the preparations of the Pan-American Games in Argentina, he did not take the conversation any further. Apparently, he did not find it problematic enough to take any action aimed at minimizing the government’s intervention in the preparations for the event.

Weeks before the inauguration of the Pan-American Games Brundage wrote to Valenzuela to demonstrate his appreciation of the “generous offer”⁷⁸ from CADCOA to receive the contestants as guests from the time they reached the borders of Argentina. Brundage emphasized that the procedure was a “very tangible manifestation”⁷⁹ of the organization’s interest in the event and that it

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Avery Brundage to Horacio Bustos Morón, 22 January 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁷⁸ Avery Brundage to Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, 3 February 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

would make everything easier to the participating countries and, therefore, add to the success of the event. Still, Brundage pointed out:

In the United States, we receive no financial help from the Government and all the money required to organize and transport our team must come from the sport-loving public. It is difficult enough to raise this money in the case of the Olympic Games, and for an entirely new event like the Pan-American Games it is doubly so.⁸⁰

In that same correspondence, Brundage reminded his colleagues:

Rule XII of the General Rules of the Comité Deportivo Pan-Americano provides that “the introductory meeting will be held at least one week before the commencement of the Games.” I am not sure as yet that I can be in Buenos Aires before February 18. We have many problems here that require my attention.⁸¹ The purpose of this introductory meeting is merely to discuss and decide on an agenda. If I do not get there in time to preside, I ask you to designate a temporary chairman. . . . Once more I compliment you on the great work you are doing for the advancement of amateur sport and Olympic ideals in the three Americas.⁸²

Brundage did not arrive until 20 February 1951 (see Figure 4). However, ten days before the opening ceremony, official representatives from several countries arrived in Buenos Aires to attend preliminary meetings related to the Pan-American Games.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Brundage had many interests to take care of, mainly his company, and the demands as IOC vice-president. Chapter 4 discusses some of the issues that filled his agenda in the beginning of the 1950s.

⁸² Avery Brundage to Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, 3 February 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.



Figure 4 - President Brundage (at the Panagra plane's stairway) and Chef de Mission Kirby (on Brundage's right) were greeted upon arrival in Buenos Aires by a group of prominent Argentine officials.⁸³

In his report to the USOC, Gustavus T. Kirby, Chef de Mission of the U.S. team in the first Pan-American Games, emphasized that the preliminary activities in the initial gatherings were about “cooperation and coordination, with the result that when officials and teams arrived they found the arrangements for the Games well made and, thereafter, carried out.”⁸⁴ Kirby’s view of the event echoed the idealist perspective that “the fundamental object of these international competitions was to bring about unity, camaraderie, and mutual understanding.”⁸⁵

⁸³ The photo is from United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, (United States: USOC, 1953), p.324.

⁸⁴ Gustavus T. Kirby, “Report of Chef de Mission,” in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, (United States: USOC, 1953), p.327.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

The First Pan-American Games

On 25 February 1951 Argentine President Juan Perón, with his wife Eva Perón besides him, received a thundering ovation opening the inaugural Games from an estimated crowd of 100,000 in the stadium officially named *Presidente Juan Domingo Perón*. The Peróns were appointed honorary presidents of the organizing committee. At that point, Perón had outspokenly manifested his intention to display his regime's success through the Pan-American Games, and to demonstrate that Argentina was not counting costs.⁸⁶

Sport officials honored Perón and his wife for their valuable contribution that made possible the inauguration of the Pan-American Games (see Figure 5).⁸⁷ The protocols of the ceremony were full of symbolic elements that emulated the Olympic Games.

⁸⁶ Torres, *Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy*, p. 168.

⁸⁷ I found evidence that Daniel J. Ferris, secretary of the United States Olympic Committee, arranged a present to Perón and his wife: a three hundred dollar diamond watch. See Daniel J. Ferris to J. Lyman Bingham, 31 January 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.



Figure 5 - Feb. 25, 1951 - Evelyn Hall, back to camera, coach of the U.S. women's track team for the Pan-American Games, gives a bouquet of roses to Mrs. Eva Perón, second from right, wife of Argentina's President Juan Perón, second from left, in Buenos Aires, at the opening of the first Pan-American Games. At left, is Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, president of the Argentine Organizing Committee.⁸⁸

The opening day started with Delfo Cabrera, Argentina's 1948 Olympic marathon winner, entering the stadium carrying his country's flag.⁸⁹ Following him came the athletes, parading in alphabetical order according to their respective nations, and officials. The official Pan-American Games insignia was reproduced on buttons, belt buckles, and pins.

⁸⁸ I am indebted to my colleague Jason Winders, from Western University, for finding this photo and sending it to me. The photo was located at the Associated Press Photo online database.

⁸⁹ The Argentinean marathon winner repeated his gold medal 1948 performance and won the Pan-American Games first marathon. See United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, (United States: USOC, 1953), p.341.

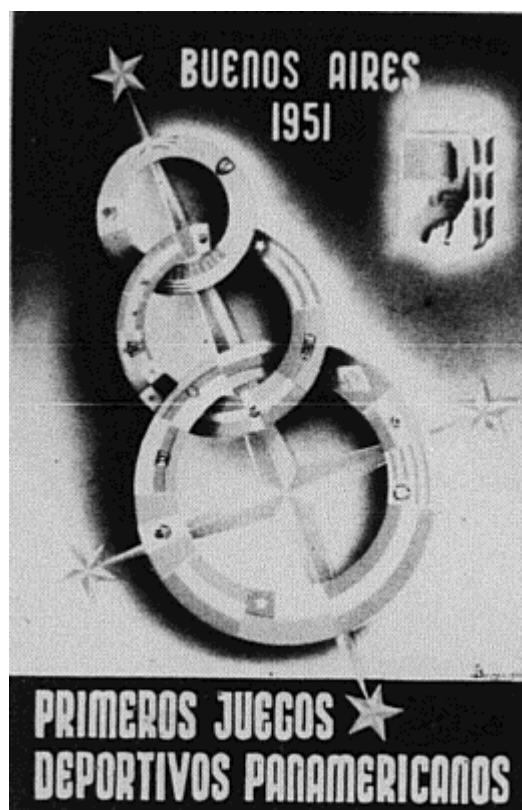


Figure 6 - This is one of the posters found in the Avery Brundage Collection. The three interlocked rings represent the Americas: North, Central, South.⁹⁰

When the athletes took their positions behind their representative flags, Rodolfo Valenzuela spoke about the significance of the Pan-American Games for the Americas, emphasizing that Argentina, united with its fraternal countries, would spread its ideals to the world. Juan Perón stood before the crowd to declare the Games open. The President greeted the public as “brother sportsmen of America.”⁹¹ When he formally opened the Games, the Olympic flag was raised. Then, symbolically, a Greek athlete named John Ossitis, entered the stadium carrying a lighted torch flown to the scene from Mount Olympus, reminding all of Ancient Greece. The flame was transferred to the Pan-American torch at the top of a tower while another Greek athlete, Aristides

⁹⁰ Image is undated, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

⁹¹ “A late but successful beginning,” in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, p.323.

Rouvanis, presented an olive wreath to President Perón. The Pan-American oath was then repeated by the competitors.⁹²



Figure 7 - The 1950 poster by Alfonsín portrays a theme of peace and friendship by featuring two clasped hands holding a graphically stylized olive branch over a grid map of the Americas.⁹³

Avery Brundage made a speech in both Spanish and English praising Argentina for hosting the Games (see Figure 7).

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ "The Spirit of Friendship Through Sports: Poster Images from the Pan-American Games, 1951-1999," copyright of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles, 1999 and LA84 Foundation, 2007. LA84 foundation website, <http://www.la84.org/the-spirit-of-friendship-through-sports-poster-images-from-the-pan-american-games-1951-1999>. Accessed on 3 September 2015.



Figure 7 - USOC's president, Avery Brundage (standing), speaks as head of the Pan-American Sports Organization at the opening ceremonies. Listening, at right of the Peróns (in white), is Dr. Rodolfo G. Valenzuela, president of the Argentine Organizing Committee.⁹⁴



Figure 8 – From left to right, watching the opening ceremonies are: Eva Perón, Juan Perón, Rodolfo Valenzuela, and Avery Brundage.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Gustavus T. Kirby, "Report of Chef de Mission," in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, (United States: USOC, 1953), 328.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

Gustavus Kirby reported that Brundage's address at the opening festivities was a "masterpiece,"⁹⁶ helping the Argentine people to realize that the representatives of the U.S. were in Buenos Aires not only to compete but, primarily, to foster goodwill and a "happy coordination."⁹⁷ Still, Kirby noticed:

While it must be always recognized that there is, and probably will be for years to come, a certain more or less subtle antagonism on the part of the Latin American countries toward the United States, we were able through our diplomatic but productive actions to continue the entente cordiale between these countries and the U.S.⁹⁸

Brundage's remarks concluded the inaugural ceremonies. Nine years had passed since the 1942 Pan-American Games had been postponed, and, the Americas were further delayed in seeing the beginning of the continental event. A windstorm on the day before the opening ceremony inflicted so much damage on facilities and equipment that the scheduled start of the competitions was altered from 26 to 27 February 1951. Twenty countries mustered representative teams to compete in Argentina: Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, Cuba, Chile, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica (the smallest delegation represented by one athlete), Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, El Salvador, Trinidad, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela, and, of course, host Argentina.⁹⁹

Since the majority of nations represented in the event were Spanish speaking countries, announcements and bulletins were issued in Spanish. The organizing committee provided only two interpreters, but it was not possible for them to be available at all times. According to the USOC 1952 Olympic Book, that issue caused a measure of confusion and misunderstanding.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Ibid., p.327.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ J. Lyman Bingham, "Report of the General Manager," in USOC, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, p. 329.

All participants received a diploma signed by the honorary presidents Juan and Eva Perón.¹⁰¹ Although there are different records of medal counts, with the support of the Perónist government, Argentine athletes were successful at the Games. They won more medals than any other national team. Many of the athletes dedicated their achievements to Perón, who demonstrated his gratitude and congratulated the athletes.¹⁰²

On 3 March 1951 Brundage hosted a dinner for IOC members attending the first Pan-American Games staged at the Roof-Garden of the Alvear Palace Hotel. Brundage offered analytic remarks regarding the developments of the international institution in Latin America:

It is a pleasure to greet you this evening here in the Argentine at this, the first gathering of I. O. C. members, I believe, in South America or for that matter in the Southern Hemisphere. Unfortunately, since the visit of President Baillet Latour, there has been little attention paid to Latin American sport by our Committee and in only a few countries there are members of the I. O. C. The distances from the headquarters of the I. O. C. and the Amateur Sport Federations in Europe are very great and contacts are few and far between. Guidance is needed, badly needed, and we of the I. O. C. must furnish it. We need more members in Latin America, members of the caliber of those chosen by Baillet-Latour twenty-five years ago. It will be good for the I. O. C. and good for Latin America.¹⁰³

Besides speaking of co-opting more members from Latin America to the IOC, that particular reunion provided Brundage with the opportunity to speak again of the ambassadorial character of sports events for fostering values and ideals. He emphasized:

Whether in South America, in North America, in Europe or in Africa, whether South or North of the equator, in whatever land, in whatever season, regardless of language difficulties, I. O. C. gatherings are

¹⁰¹ USOC, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, p. 329.

¹⁰² Torres, *Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy*, p. 168.

¹⁰³ Avery Brundage, "Remarks of Welcome by Avery Brundage at dinner given by him to the Ladies and Gentlemen of the I. O. C. attending the *Primeros Juegos Deportivos Panamericanos* at Buenos Aires," 3 March 1951, *Olympic Review*, no. 27, June 1951, p. 42.

marked by a goodfellowship, a bonhomie — that is rare in this materialistic world in which we live. This unique fraternity of sport I think is due to the fact that sportsmen want nothing from each other — they seek to give and not to take — they are held together by devotion to a common ideal.¹⁰⁴

Newspaper coverage of the first Pan-American Games varied. In Argentina, in general, the papers gave a positive assessment to the Games, emphasizing that the event was well organized, and projected a good image of the country abroad.¹⁰⁵

The announced success of the Games strengthened Perón's will to host the Olympic Games in the capital city of Argentina in the near future. On 11 March 1951 the *Chicago Tribune* reported that, at a luncheon given to Argentine athletes who competed in the first Pan-American Games, Perón made the announcement that Argentina wanted to host the Olympics. According to the newspaper report, Perón did not indicate how much the project would cost but he said it would "contain every type of stadium and field required for Olympic Games."¹⁰⁶

On the other hand, U.S. coverage criticized the Peronist regime for exploiting the Pan-American Games for political purposes. During the events, the *Chicago Tribune* opined that "President Perón emerged as the man who can make political capital out of sports."¹⁰⁷ According to the newspaper report, spectators witnessed "the most pompous sports pageant in Latin-American history."¹⁰⁸ The report also alleged that Perón spent US\$5 million for the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Torres, *Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy*, p. 168

¹⁰⁶ "Perón Includes Olympic City in Next Year Plan," *Chicago Tribune Press Service*, 11 March 1951, ABC, box 203, reel 117.

¹⁰⁷ "Perón to yield Pan-Am. Stage to tests today," *Chicago Tribune*, 27 February 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Games, emphasizing that expenses of contestants during their stay in Argentina, as well as of members of delegations, were paid by the government:

These games are strictly a Juan Peron and Eva Peron show, according to the multicolored posters, headlines stories and editorials in the Peronista press, the radio stations, and adornments at the games headquarters. Pictures of Peron and Eva adorn every hallway and office in that building.¹⁰⁹

There was more accusatory coverage. The *New York Times*' Arthur Daley compared the political use of the Pan-American Games to Adolf Hitler's misappropriation of the 1936 Berlin Games. Torres considered such comparison exaggerated. For Torres, unlike the Soviet Union or the United States in the context of the Cold War, Perón did not approach international sport as way to prove political supremacy.¹¹⁰

The apparent fact though, was that there was a concern related to Argentina's political image. An incident reported by the general manager of the American team, J. Lyman Bingham, is an illustration of this. On one of the days near the close of the Games, an interpreter informed him that two American athletes had been taken in custody. Upon investigation, Bingham found that the athletes engaged in an argument with a member of the Argentinean police. The manager interrogated the athletes, who explained what had happened:

The boys said they had taken a movie shot of one of the guards at the main gate, while in the act of obtaining identification for one of the boys while his arms were raised overhead. The officer demanded that the camera be turned over to the police, which the boys rejected. . . .I instructed the owner of the camera to turn it over to the officers, who promised to remove the objectional part of the film, and return the camera to him on the following day. This was done.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ See Torres, *Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy*, p.171.

¹¹¹ J. Lyman Bingham, "Report of the General Manager," in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, p.331.

Bingham recounted that after he returned home, he learned that the Argentinean paper *Noticias Graficas* charged that the U.S. athletes in the Pan-American Games “had instructions of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation to take photographs which would damage Argentina’s prestige abroad.”¹¹² According to Bingham:

The paper said photographs taken from two members of the United States team proved there was a plan to paint Argentina as a totalitarian country. The paper also said that an official Argentine investigation showed “all 128 members” had been instructed by the F.B.I to gather evidence against Argentina. This demonstrates how easily an innocent prank can be misunderstood in a foreign country.¹¹³

Clearly, the press story did not emerge from a simple matter of misunderstanding. As Torres puts it, because of Argentina’s neutrality for a limited period during WWII, “anti-Argentine sentiments were still strong in certain circles within the US Department of State.”¹¹⁴ Such sentiments persisted long after the end of the war.

Incidents apart, on 8 March 1951, the closing ceremony of the Pan-American Games attracted more than 75,000,00 people. U.S. authorities and officials present at the Games emphasized the friendly atmosphere and the spirit of Inter-American cooperation they found in the 1951 Pan-American Games. At the conclusion of the Games Brundage reportedly termed them as “perfect”¹¹⁵ and a “tremendous success.”¹¹⁶ The American demonstrated gratification with the overall showing of Latin American competitors and

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ See Torres, *Peronism, International Sport, and Diplomacy*, pp.157-158.

¹¹⁵ “Brundage Terms Pan-American Games a Success,” *Los Angeles Examiner*, 11 March 11 1951, in ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

stressed the fact that their countries were becoming increasingly “sports conscious.”¹¹⁷

On 28 March 1951 U.S. newspapers continued to echo stories about the Pan-American Games. Lou Miller, a reporter of *The New York World-Telegram and Sun*, wrote an extensive report exposing an incident involving U.S. track athletes:

The thing seems to have been hushed up in official reports – perhaps because the State Department doesn’t want anyone to get the idea our (Good) Neighbor policy isn’t functioning as smoothly as it should. Nevertheless, it seems well established that Uncle Sam’s athletes received a good shoving around from their hosts at the recently concluded Pan-American Games in Buenos Aires. Returning U.S stars decline to be quoted, but otherwise, speak freely about the deal they and their mates received from Argentina’s athletic officials, her state-subsidized athletes and the mobs in the stands. They agree their hosts pulled rough stuff on competitors from other countries, too, but seemed to take special delight in bumping the lads from the U.S.A.¹¹⁸

Nevertheless, such a story seems not to have represented the general climate between American and South American athletes. Bingham wrote: “the excellent conduct and sportsmanship of our athletes made many friends for the United States, and dissipated much of the propaganda that has been spread throughout South America about our nation.”¹¹⁹ Though Bingham did not provide an account of the propaganda referred to, he emphasized that the American team also gained the admiration of the Argentinean people.

Bingham’s general assessment of the South American effort was positive. He said that Buenos Aires proved to be an excellent host for the Games. Moreover,

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Lou Miller, “Pan-Am Games get real Panning by U.S. track Stars,” 28 March 1951, *The New York World-Telegram and Sun* in ABC, Box 203, Reel 117. Parentheses mine.

¹¹⁹ J. Lyman Bingham, “Report of the General Manager,” in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, p.332.

President Domingo Peron and his wife, Evita, Dr. Rodolfo Valenzuela, President of the organizing committee, and all others, did everything possible to conduct a good set of games and made the visitors feel welcome to the city. Buenos Aires is a beautiful, modern, progressive city with a European atmosphere made distinctive through the addition of our new world culture. The people are very sports minded and make wide use of the many sport facilities provided for them.¹²⁰

Upon returning to the U.S., in March 1951, Brundage wrote a full report to the IOC on the conditions in Latin America. A Commission to study those conditions had been struck at the IOC meeting in Copenhagen a year before.¹²¹ Its aim was “to assist organizers of regional games and study sport activities in Latin America.”¹²² In the report, Brundage expressed the opinion of the IOC commission composed of himself, Cuban IOC member Miguel Moenck, and Peruvian IOC Member Alfredo Benavides:

All the Latin American members of the I. O. C. who were present in Buenos Aires met with the Committee, which was appointed in Copenhagen last year to study Latin American affairs. They agreed unanimously that the connection between the International Olympic Committee and Latin America was very weak and they felt that something must be done immediately to strengthen this connection in order to avoid serious difficulties in the future. Having started this tremendous surge of activity, it is a responsibility of the I. O. C. to direct it into proper channels. . . . They felt that something must be done at once to steer the Central American and Pan-American Games in the right direction and to stop violations of Olympic principles which have occurred and which will probably become more flagrant if something is not done promptly.¹²³

¹²⁰ J. Lyman Bingham, “Report of the General Manager,” in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, p.331.

¹²¹ See “IOC Executive Committee Minutes,” Copenhagen, 30, 11-18 May 1950, in Wolf Lyberg, ed. *IOC Executive Committee Minutes*, Vol II (1948-1969). The volume is housed at the International Centre for Olympic Studies Archives, The University of Western Ontario, London, Canada.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Avery Brundage, “Report of Commission appointed by the IOC at its meeting in Copenhagen in 1950 to study conditions in Latin America,” *Olympic Review*, no.27, March 1951, pp.37-39, <http://library.la84.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview/1951/BDCE27/BDCE27n.pdf>. Accessed on 20 January 2015.

Brundage's overall tone regarding amateur sports in Latin America was noticeably less enthusiastic than his impressions of the organization of the Pan-American Games in Argentina:

Because practically all amateur sport in Latin American countries must be financed by the Government with consequent danger of political interference, it is recommended that the I. O. C. immediately initiate a campaign of education to assist the National Olympic Committees in this area. Governmental bodies should be informed that it is quite proper for them to control physical education, health programs and physical training in the schools and through the country but that the direction of amateur competitive sport should rest in the National Federations and in the National Olympic Committees, which must be free, independent and autonomous.¹²⁴

Still, when writing to USOC officials, Brundage did not discredit CADCOA and the organizing committee in Buenos Aires:

I am happy to report that we had complete cooperation in our efforts to keep all the arrangements correct and in full conformity with Amateur and Olympic standards. Mistakes were made, it is true, but they were partially due to inexperience. I have nothing but praise for the attitude of the Argentine sponsors of the Games. I have written to them to this effect.¹²⁵

In the abovementioned correspondence, the mistakes Brundage referred to appeared to have been related to bad judging in boxing and basketball. All the experiences considered, the first Pan-American Games were the biggest international multi-sport event ever held in Latin America until that time in history.

The overall success of the event strengthened the aspirations of sport authorities to host the Olympics in South America. On the other hand, the Games served IOC authorities as an assessment of the Olympic Movement and amateur sport progresses in that region of the world. Though claiming the Pan-

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Avery Brundage to Daniel J. Ferris, 9 April 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

American Committee's autonomy, Latin American officials emphasized Olympic symbols, protocols, and rules in its Games. I argue that such embracement on the part of the Pan-American officials was based on the prestige of the IOC worldwide, as that connection only favored the desired international success of the Pan-American Games. Visibility was important to that end. Another reason is certainly ideological. Nevertheless, accepting, sharing, and promoting ideological messages attached to sport was fairly easy as they related to common universal values, positively linked to moral principles.

Even though the 1956 host city of the Olympic Games had already been chosen, shortly after the end of the Pan-American Games, IOC member Horacio Bustos Morón told Edström that if the 1956 Olympics could not be held in Melbourne for any reason, Buenos Aires would be willing to take over. The regime's sport success and Perón's dream of Olympic glory in Buenos Aires, as well as his political prominence, did not last long. In September 1955 the *Revolución Libertadora* (Liberating Revolution) ousted Perón from the presidency. His successors urged disintegration of his dreams and policies, including aspirations to hold the Olympic Games.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Torres, *Stymied Expectations Buenos Aires' Persistent Efforts to Host Olympic Games*, pp.47-75.

Chapter 4

Putting the Pan-American Games on a Sound Footing

World War II ravaged Europe, brought wholesale destruction to Germany, and elevated the Soviet Union and the United States to a confrontation as superpowers. The IOC leaders, Sigfrid Edström and Avery Brundage, spent a considerable amount of time and effort to accommodate the new balance of power within the Olympic World. As vice-president of the IOC in 1950, Brundage had his hands full relative to the vexing problem presented by the Soviet Union's entrance into the Olympic Movement.¹ The disputes over Germany² and China,³ commercialism, apartheid in South Africa, and amateurism controversies, all converged to temper his leadership of the Pan-American Sports Organization.

At the same IOC Session where the Committee discussed East Germany's and the Soviet Union's requests for recognition of their respective NOCs, Brundage read his report on the Pan-American Games inaugurated

¹ Since the end of World War I, the Soviet state had stood apart from the Olympic Games, criticizing them as a plaything of international capitalism. The IOC, for its part, displayed little interest in having Soviet athletes participate in the Olympic Games throughout the 1920s and 1930s. World War II changed this relationship. In the mid-1940s, the Russians signaled that they wished to return to the various international sports federations and to enter the Olympics. See Senn, *Power, Politics and the Olympic Games*, pp. 84-92.

² No German team competed at the 1948 Olympics in London. Soon after the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) in 1949, its National Olympic Committee approached the IOC, seeking recognition. Just prior to the IOC session in Vienna in 1951, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) also formed an NOC and requested recognition. This created controversy, as the Federal Republic and its NOC claimed to represent both West and East Germany, but did not control the latter. Despite lengthy discussions, no resolution was reached in 1951, and the matter was held over until February 1952. See Senn, *Power, Politics and the Olympic Games*, pp. 99-105.

³ The case of China posed a different problem for the IOC. The communist victory on the mainland in 1949, which drove the nationalist government of Chiang Kai-Shek to the island of Formosa (Taiwan), created a dilemma. The IOC had to establish whether to choose between the two Chinas or to recognize them both. See: Senn, *Power, Politics and the Olympic Games*, pp. 101-117.

months earlier. He also provided an account of the general situation of amateur sports, and the progress of the Olympic Movement in Latin America. It was in Vienna on 3 May 1951 that, after prolonged debate, the IOC recognized the Soviet NOC.⁴ Though such a major decision might have been the center of the Committee's attention in that meeting, the proliferation of regional Games was also an issue of concern in Vienna (see Chart 1). At the end of that 1951 Session, in spite of the overall success of the inaugural Pan-American Games as reported by Brundage, the Executive Committee members pointed out that there were "too many Regional Games and, in the long run, the status of Olympic Games would decline because of their existence."⁵

Chart 1 – Existing regional games in the 1950s⁶

Europe	America	Asia	Intercontinental
Balkan Games (1930)	Pan- American Games (1951)	Asian Games (1951)	Empire/Commonwealth Games (1930)
-	Bolivarian Games (1938)	South East Asian Games (1959)	Mediterranean Games (1951)
-	Central American and Caribbean Games (1926)	-	Arab Games (1953)

In the meantime, important changes occupied the Olympic leadership. In 1949 before the Pan-American Games were inaugurated, IOC president Sigfrid Edström had already made explicit that he endorsed Avery Brundage as his successor.⁷ This chapter demonstrates that Brundage's increasing duties within

⁴ Senn, *Power, Politics and the Olympic Games*, p. 92.

⁵ "IOC Executive Committee Minutes," Vienna, 31, 3 May 1951, in Wolf Lyberg, ed. *IOC Executive Committee Minutes*, Vol II (1948-1969), 1992.

⁶ In parentheses are the years of inauguration of each event. The information in the chart was obtained from: Philip Barker, "The European Games completes the Olympic Jigsaw," *Journal of Olympic History* 23 (2015): 6-11.

⁷ Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On*, p. 110.

the IOC and his soon-to-be presidency of the Committee, in the long term, compromised his involvement in the Pan-American Sport Organization.

Despite resistance within the IOC to the notion of an American at the head of the Committee, Brundage was elected president in August 1952. The election was very close. Arguably, his more than a decade of involvement with Latin American athletic festivals such as the Central American Games, the Bolivarian Games,⁸ his leadership in the Pan-American Games Sports Organization, and his sponsorship of many of the South and Central American IOC members earned him support among the Hispanic delegates from the Western Hemisphere.⁹ The paucity and long intervals of correspondence between Brundage and his colleagues from PASO between 1952 and 1955 are factors that demonstrate that his activities within the hemispheric institution waned considerably.

Unmistakably, in spite of the IOC Executive Committee's concerns related to the proliferation of regional Games, Brundage sought to accommodate those kinds of events under the auspices of the IOC. It seemed a better option than spending energy and time rivaling them. Thus, having previously detected diverse problems in regional events (mainly related to violations to the amateurism code and political interferences), and having established that "educating" Latin America in sport issues was necessary (see Chapters 2 and 3), the IOC developed strategies aimed at preserving regional games. On 16 July 1952 at the Helsinki IOC Session, the IOC enlisted and approved rules for patronizing regional Games. The IOC members agreed on twelve rules by which regional games should abide if they desired to enjoy the

⁸ Brundage attended the third Bolivarian Games held in Caracas, Venezuela in December 1951.

⁹ See Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, p. 114.

Committee's patronage and use the Olympic flag. The rules were released as follows:

- 1 – The Games must be restricted to amateurs. They must not extend over a period of more than 15 days.
- 2- Contestants must belong to National Federations which are members of International Federations; and participating countries must have National Olympic Committees recognized by the International Olympic Committee.
- 3 – In order to further the high ideals of the Olympic Movement (which these Games should serve, according to Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who suggested the organization of such competitions to supplement the Olympic Games), Regional Games should be confined to athletic sports controlled by the International Federations recognized by the IOC. They should not be held in conjunction with any other event such as Fairs or Exhibitions, or any other athletic manifestation of any importance.
- 4 – They must not be organized within the 12-month period following or preceding the Olympic Games. They should not be held more frequently than one in four years. Entries must be limited to the region designated.
- 5- The ceremonies in connection with the Games may be similar to, but must not be identical with those of the Olympic Games. There must be no extraneous events connected with the Games, particularly those of a political nature. The loud speaker must be used for sport purposes only and no political speeches are to be permitted. In fact, there must be no commercial or political intervention whatsoever.
- 6 – Control of all technical arrangements for the Games, including the appointment of officials and juries, must be entrusted to the International Federations. Arrangements must be made to secure the presence of one representative from each IF which sport figures in the Program.
- 7 – There must be an International Court of Appeal similar to that described in Olympic Rule Nr. 49, for the purpose of settling any matter of dispute outside of the control of the respective International Federation.
- 8 – The rules and regulations of the Games must be submitted to the International Olympic Committee and to the International Federations concerned; They should be written in English and French, or more languages, so all participants may be fully informed.
- 9 – Provision must be made for the presence of a representative of the IOC, who shall prepare a complete report of the Games for the IOC.
- 10 – The words "Olympic" and "Olympiad," the five rings and the motto Citius, Altius, Fortius, must not be employed in any manner in connection with Regional Games. The Olympic flag may be used only in one place and that is in the Stadium, on a flag pole alongside the center pole bearing the flag of the Regional event; Transportation and use of any flame is prohibited.

11 – The organization, the facilities, equipment and other arrangements should be ready at least a year before the opening of the Games.

12 – Countries qualified to participate in the Games of a certain region are authorized to organize a Regional Federation or similar organization and to nominate an Executive Board, which may contain IOC members from the region and representatives of the International Federations.¹⁰

Obviously, such a document challenged the claimed autonomy of the Pan-American Committee (see Chapter 2). In general, with the aforementioned rules in practice, independence certainly became relative for all regional Games aspiring IOC patronage. In sum, regional sporting events had to promote the Olympic Movement's "high ideals" with limited use of its symbols and protocols, and abide by the Committee's rules, regulations and determinations.

Apparently, there was no protest on the part of authorities who organized and executed regional games worldwide at the time. Thus, the second Pan-American Games had to be observant of such rules. However, in the 1955 event, a number of situations that infringed on the full implementation of the proposed rules emerged. The next section explores the context and main events related to the IInd Pan-American Games. In general, it demonstrates that Avery Brundage, the so-called father of the Pan-American Games, was too occupied with the full penetration of the Cold War into the Olympic Movement to continue assiduously assisting the Pan-American Sports Organization. Opportunely, according to Brundage's own words, "the child was fortunate to fall into Mexican hands."¹¹

¹⁰ Comité Olímpico Internacional, "Reglas para los Juegos Regionales," Helsinki, 47, 22-24 July 1952, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117. Translation from Spanish is mine.

¹¹ Speech of President Avery Brundage given on 3 January 1955 at the IV Pan-American Sport Congress in Mexico, *Olympic Review*, No. 51, August 1955, p.27.

“Falling into Mexican hands”: The 1955 Pan-American Games

When the closing ceremony of the first Pan-American-Games was held on 8 March 1951, the second edition of the event had already been awarded to Mexico City days earlier at the IIIrd Pan-American Sports Congress.

The Argentinean organizing committee had set a high standard in the realization of the first Games. During the third Congress, the president of the Argentinean Olympic Committee, Valenzuela, proposed that any country wanting to organize the following Pan-American Games would have to do what the Argentinean organizing committee did: provide room and board to all delegations of the participating countries.

With the support of Miguel Alemán Velasco,¹² president of the Mexican Republic, José de Jesús Clark Flores, president of both the Mexican Sport Confederation and the Mexican Olympic Committee, attended the IIIrd Pan-American Congress and proposed to celebrate the second edition of the Pan-American Games in Mexico City. Flores presented a detailed project to gather the necessary votes for that purpose. However, he opposed Valenzuela's idea that the organizing committee should pay for the expenses of all delegations of the participating countries. In fact, the Mexican proposal, though well planned, was modest in terms of costs. The Mexican proposal faced opposition from South American sport officials, mainly the Argentineans. In the end, Mexico City won the right to host the second edition of the hemispheric event. If a well-elaborated plan alone was not enough to ensure the support of the Pan-

¹² Velasco served as president of the Mexican Republic from 1946 to 1952. Velasco pursued industrial development, and his foreign policy preserved the close relationship with the United States, developed during World War II. For additional information, see: Howard F. Cline, *Mexico: Revolution to Evolution, 1940-1960* (New York: Oxford University Press 1963), p. 158.

American Organization's delegates, an anecdotal story from that Congress explains how the Mexican authorities tried to secure the right to host the Pan-American Games in 1955:

During the session, Clark¹³ made his arguments against the Argentinean proposal. After he finished and before the representative of Argentina and the president of the Pan-American Organization could answer the arguments, Clark gave the signal to Esparza to walk into the room. He had a big box filled with silver presents from Mexico for all delegates. The Argentine and Chilean delegations tried to send Esparza out of the room. As Doctor Valenzuela was making his counter arguments to Clark, many of the delegates got up from their seats and went to pick up their presents. Disorder arose to the point that very few of the delegates were paying attention to the speaker. When the meeting was finally reorganized, Mexico already had a good advantage over the other two countries.¹⁴

This episode resembles the discussions over the practice and function of giving and receiving gifts in the context of competitive bidding process to host sport events.¹⁵ In this particular case, the “gift-giving culture”¹⁶ seems to have contributed to the decision of PASO's delegates to award the second Pan-American Games to Mexico. By the statutes of the hemispheric organization, when Mexico obtained the right to host the Games, the president of its Olympic Committee, Flores, became automatically the leader of the local Organizing Committee.

Obtaining the 1955 Pan-American Games for Mexico was Flores' second international accomplishment when it came to hosting sport events. In 1950, as president of the Mexican Sport Confederation, Flores was the head of the Mexican delegation to the VIth Central American and Caribbean Games held in

¹³ Occasionally, mainly English writers refer to Flores as Clark (his first surname).

¹⁴ Roberto B. Carmona, *Biography of Jose de Jesus Clark Flores: Man of Honor* (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, Department of Physical Education, April 1981), p.61.

¹⁵ To read more about the gift culture in the Olympic movement as astute politics see: Douglas Booth, “Gifts of Corruption? Ambiguities of Obligation in the Olympic Movement,” *OLYMPIKA: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 8 (1999): 43-68.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

Guatemala City. On that occasion, he triumphed in his proposal to host the VIIth edition of that competition in Mexico City in 1954. Flores became the head of two organizing committees between 1950 and 1951. The challenge was considerable, but the organizer was dedicated to both festivals.

Little is available on the life and work of Flores. However, two important sources gathered for this study help to understand his contributions to the organization of the second Pan-American Games. One of them is the two-page biographical text about him published by the *Olympic Review*.¹⁷ The text noted Flores' two consuming passions: his country and sport. It pictures Flores as a full supporter of the amateur ideal:

*We must stress that, as an apostle of Olympism, General José de J. Clark Flores was a noble Mexican, and that he felt a veneration, an admiration, a boundless love for his country... He believed in the pedagogical and moral value of sport, in youth, and in the marvelous means of promoting harmony between the many different peoples of our planet, through the contests in the Stadium.*¹⁸

Flores' biographer corroborates the idealistic perspective that characterized the sport administrator. Carmona's work¹⁹ described Flores' long-time dedication to the development of sport projects for the youth of his country. Carmona noted: "he did not wait for the money from the government to start working on sport projects; instead, he used his own finances so he could begin immediately."²⁰ With such ideals and philosophy, Flores immediately began working on the organization of the IInd Pan-American games. On 25 May 1951 he mailed a letter to Brundage reporting that the organizing Committee of the IInd Pan-American Games had been already formed. Flores emphasized: "The persons

¹⁷ General Jose de J. Clark [Flores], *Olympic Review*, No. 43, April 1971, pp.193-194. Available at: <http://library.la84.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview/1971/ore43/ore43d.pdf>. Accessed on 27 August 2015.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Carmona, *Biography of Jose de Jesus Clark Flores*, pp.1-181.

²⁰ Ibid. p, 59.

forming the Executive Board of our Committee are 100% amateur sportsmen who have experience with sport organizations.”²¹ Indeed, experience had a positive impact on the initial and avid preparations of the second Pan-American Games. Flores himself had a long history of involvement with sport and sport organizations. He fenced and played basketball as a young man before devoting himself to sports administration. Flores served as President of the Mexican Basketball Federation, the Mexican Sports Confederation, and of *the Comité Olimpico Mexicano*.²² Thus, the challenge ahead for the Mexican Olympic Committee was taken seriously from the beginning. Even with a creditable career, Flores humbly expected that Brundage, “as a prominent member of the IOC,”²³ would provide his “help and counseling whenever necessary.”²⁴

It is important to mention that the overall development of Mexican sport favored the work of the Mexican Olympic Committee in the preparations of the IInd Pan-American Games. Mexico had successfully hosted an international sports festival, however modest (see Chapter 1). In fact, following its first participation in the 1924 Paris Olympics and the hosting of the 1926 Central American Games, Mexican sport developed “with more of an eye toward participation in international contests.”²⁵ However, as common to most nations during World War II, Mexican sport focused on meeting wartime needs, often

²¹ José de J. Clark Flores to Avery Brundage, 25 May 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

²² Sometimes, he held two such positions simultaneously. See General Jose de J. Clark, *Olympic Review*, No. 43, April 1971, pp.193-194. Available at: <http://library.la84.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview/1971/ore43/ore43d.pdf>. Accessed on 27 August 2015.

²³ José de J. Clark Flores to Avery Brundage, 25 May 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Kevin Witherspoon, *Before the Eyes of the World: Mexico and the 1968 Olympic Games*. DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2008, p. 19.

with sporting facilities being co-opted by the military.²⁶ In the post-war era, though, sport achieved heights of popularity, accompanying improvements in the country's infrastructure. Such advances did not go unnoticed by members of the IOC. In November 1951 the IOC President Sigfrid Edström visited Mexico with Brundage. The IOC leaders were impressed by Mexico's development, and in particular its efforts to promote sports. At that time, Brundage and Edström encouraged Marte R. Gomez (Mexican IOC member since 1934) to submit nominations for the election of a second Mexican IOC member. It is not clear if the visit to Mexico was aimed at gathering votes for the 1952 IOC presidential election.²⁷ The fact is that with the full support of Avery Brundage, Flores became a member of the IOC at the 46th IOC Session in Oslo 1952.²⁸

²⁶ Mexico stood among the Allies of World War II and was one of two Latin American nations to send combat troops to serve in the Second World War. The other was Brazil. See *Before the Eyes of the World*, p.20.

²⁷ For more information on the wider context of the role of sport in Mexican society and politics, see: Claire Brewster and Keith Brewster, *Representing the Nation: Sport and Spectacle in Post-revolutionary Mexico* (London: Routledge, 2010).

²⁸ Extract of the 46th Session of The International Olympic Committee, Oslo, 12-13 February 1952, *Olympic Review*, No. 32, March 1952, pp.13-14.

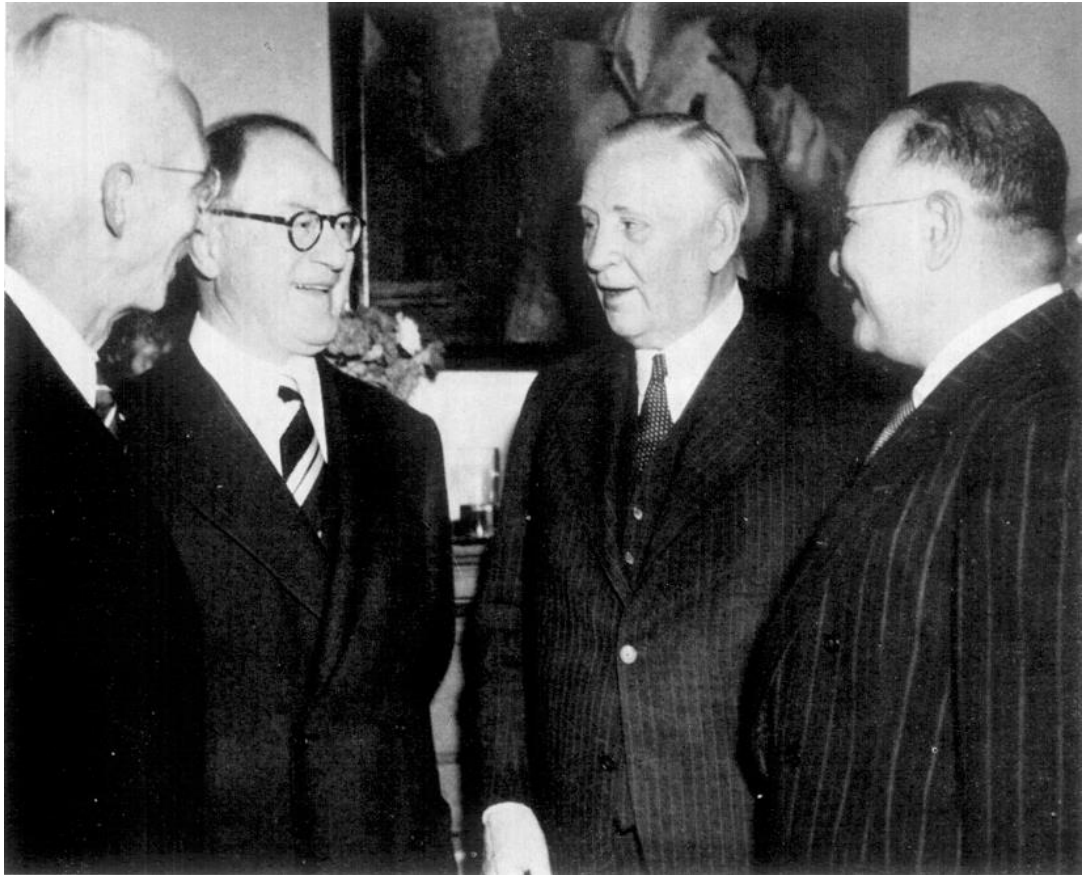


Figure 9 - Four members of the IOC gathered in Mexico City on 12 November 1951. From left to right: Miguel A. Moenck (Cuba), Avery Brundage, J. S. Edström (Sweden), Marte R. Gomez (Mexico).²⁹

The 1950s enhanced the growing reputation of Mexican sports. Flores' work, experience, and reliability greatly contributed to such reputation. Based on the evidence examined in this chapter, I argue that much of the success of the IInd Pan-American Games, and, later, of PASO's survival in its critical years of existence, was due to Flores' experience, dedication, careful planning, and mainly, to the convergence of his ideals with Brundage's.

Indeed, the organizing committee of the second Pan-American Games was determined to set a new standard of excellence for the Western Hemisphere sport festival. Only three months after the closure of the inaugural

²⁹ The photo was obtained from *Olympic Review*, 31 January 1952, p.13. Available at: <http://library.la84.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview/1952/BDCE31/BDCE31e.pdf>. Accessed on 2 September 2015.

Games, and before the IOC presented its rules curtailing the regional games' autonomy approved in the Helsinki meeting, Flores wrote to Brundage in order to update him of what was already being done for the organization of the second Pan-American festival. Flores proposed a contest between artists and writers from the continent to create the Pan-American symbol and motto. He explained:

Dear Sir:

We feel it is necessary that the Pan-American Games have a shield and motto by themselves to advertise the event and to be used on the flag of the games to wave together with the Olympic flag and with those of the competing nations.³⁰

On 25 September 1951 Brundage fully supported the idea to arrange the contest:

Dear General Clark:

The contest you have arranged to select an appropriate emblem and motto for the Juegos Pan Americanos is an excellent idea, which should produce good results. The important thing is to obtain widespread publicity. A notice should be sent to all athletic and art organizations in the three Americas. Perhaps you should specify who will select the Jury. The members could be chosen by Olympic Committees in the respective countries named. Another thing that will have to be considered is the difficulty and expense of arranging a meeting. I suppose a decision could be reached by mail, or you could postpone your contest for a few months and have the Jury meet during the Olympic Games in Finland, where presumably most of them will be present.³¹

Following Brundage's suggestion, the Pan-American Organizing Committee quickly outlined the regulations of the proposed contest. The Committee established that the motto should consist of four words written in Latin or covering the four languages spoken in the continent (Spanish, English, Portuguese, and French). The emblem, in turn, should be plain, aesthetic, and

³⁰ José de J. Clark Flores to Avery Brundage, 27 August 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

³¹ Avery Brundage to José de J. Clark Flores, 25 September 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

suggestive. Contestants could enter the competition for the motto, the emblem or both. Cash prizes, a gold medal, and a diploma signed by the President and the secretary of the Pan-American Sport Organization would be granted. The winning motto and emblem would become the property of the Pan-American Committee.³²

The winning motto, “América: Espíritu, Sport, Fraternité,” was officially announced at the Vth General Assembly of PASO held in Mexico City on 9 March 1954. The motto of the organization remains to this date. The emblem included the motto together with the Pan American Torch placed across five concentric rings in yellow, green, white, red and blue from center in that order (see Figure 10).³³

³² José de J. Clark Flores to Avery Brundage, 1 October 1951, ABC, Box 203, Reel 117.

³³ In 1988, with the approval of the IOC, the emblem was modified. The five Olympic rings are now superimposed on the Pan American Torch. See Pan American Sports Organization, *Statute*, available at: <http://www.paso-odepa.org/en/PASO/statute.html>. Accessed on August 27, 2015.



Figure 10 - The original emblem and motto of the Pan-American Games. ³⁴

³⁴ I found only a black and white photo of the original emblem. See United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1956 Olympic Book: quadrennial report*, p.285.



Figure 11 - The updated emblem with the five rings.³⁵

Remarkably, between 1951 and 1953 Flores was fully engaged in the organization of both the VIIth Central American and Caribbean Games and the second Pan-American event. Carrying out the organization of two international events did not seem to compromise their rapid and efficient organization. When Flores was elected IOC member at the 46th IOC Session in Oslo 1952,³⁶ he

³⁵ This image was obtained from the Pan American Sports Organization official website. Available at: <http://www.paso-odepa.org/en/News/>. Accessed on 20 August 2015.

³⁶ Flores' ideals and competence earned him a close connection with Brundage. In 1963 Flores rose to the Executive Board and served as vice-president of the IOC from 1963 to 1970.

read a letter from the President of the Mexican Republic to the delegates of the meeting. According to the minutes of that Session, he suggested to the IOC:

...that the (Olympic) Games of 1960 might be held in Mexico City or eventually the one of 1956 in case Melbourne could not come to a decision regarding the organizing of these Games in four years hence. General de Clark proposes to the I. O. C. to hold its Session of 1953 as well as the meeting with the I. F. in Mexico City.³⁷

The meetings of the Executive Committee of the IOC were held in Mexico City from 15 to 16 April 1953 at the Hotel El Prado. Subsequently, the IOC convened its members for the 48th IOC Session from 17 to 20 April 1953 in the same location. Brundage remarked that he was “very glad to see the big Olympic family meeting in America for the first time”³⁸ and that he hoped that the continent could host similar Conferences “as regularly as possible.”³⁹

A change in Mexican national politics compromised Flores’ involvement in the organization of the second Pan-American Games. In 1952 Adolfo Tomás Ruiz Cortines assumed the presidency of Mexico. Cortines then dismissed Flores from his prestigious military position. On 23 October 1953 Flores announced his resignation from both the Mexican Olympic Committee and the Mexican Sports Confederation. According to his biographer, Flores admitted that he wanted to leave the organizations before the president of the country had “the pleasure” to do it.⁴⁰

When Flores resigned his positions, the organization of both the VIIth Central American and Caribbean Games, and the Pan-American Games were well advanced. A number of sporting facilities were built as well as the athletes’

³⁷ Extract of the 46th Session of The International Olympic Committee, Oslo, 12-13 February 1952, *Olympic Review*, No. 32, March 1952, pp.13-14. Parentheses mine.

³⁸ Extract of the Conference of the Executive Committee of the IOC with delegates of National Olympic Committees, *Olympic Review*, No.39-40, June 1953, p. 36-42.
<http://library.la84.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview/1953/BDCE39/BDCE39f.pdf>

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Carmona, *Biography of Jose de Jesus Clark Flores: Man of Honor*, p. 56.

village, which was located on the campus of the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*. President of the IOC Avery Brundage paid a visit to Mexico City early in March 1954 in order to represent the Committee at the VIIth Central America and Caribbean Games, which opened on 6 March 1954. Brundage attended the inaugural ceremony, inspected with utmost care all the installations, was present at several meetings, and honored many athletes by presenting the medals. Reporting on the Games, Brundage emphasized their historical significance linking them to the broader Olympic Movement:

Last March in Mexico City were held the VII Central American Games, the oldest of the Regional Games held under the sanction of the International Olympic Committee. This was the first great international event held in the beautiful new stadium in Mexico City, one of the finest in the world. It is located in the wonderful University City just built to house the oldest University in the Western Hemisphere. In the history of amateur sport and the Olympic Movement these Games are very important, and this is perhaps the best moment to emphasize this importance. They were the first Games of a regional character organized under the patronage of the International Olympic Committee at the direct suggestion of President Count Baillet-Latour and they have served as a school for countries new to the world of sport which otherwise would not have participated for many years in the Olympic Games, and as a training ground for young athletes who, without the opportunity more modest but irreplaceable of the Regional Games, would never had attained an Olympic level.⁴¹

In citing the origins of the Pan-American Games, Brundage was oblivious of the sports festival that took place in Dallas, 1937. He added that by paying attention to the records and observing the number of events in the program of the Central American and Caribbean Games, anyone

...may realize immediately the vast progress that has been made in these Regional Games, which were, among other things, a model for the organization of the Pan American Games for the Western Hemisphere in

⁴¹ Avery Brundage, The VIIth Central American Games, *Olympic Review*, No. 47, August-September 1954, p. 20.

its entirety, which are to be held, for the second time, also in the City of Mexico next year.⁴²

Avery Brundage also demonstrated that he was impressed by the quality of the facilities, and other aspects of the organization of the VIIth Central American and Caribbean Games:

The athletes were lodged at the “University City” of Mexico, one of the most ambitiously conceived and accomplished architectural projects in the world. Their meals were served in the building of the new “Cafeteria”, in the same University City. In no other set of international Games had the athletes a better conditioned dining room ; and the food, prepared according to the best dietetic standards, left nothing to be desired. The dormitories of the University were used as a village for the competitors and officials and the athletes and their coaches had at their disposition there several assembly halls, service of Mail, Telegraph, Telephone, Bank, and so forth. All the area of the Central American Village was connected by telephone and loud speaker, so that it was possible to reach anyone in whatever place he happened to be.⁴³



Figure 12 - One of the University of Mexico buildings where contestants in the Pan-American Games were housed and fed.⁴⁴

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 22.

⁴⁴ II Pan-American Games, *Olympic Review*, no. 49, February 1955, pp. 25-27.

The VIIth Central American and Caribbean Games' success raised expectations for the 1955 Pan-American Games. Both events were a prelude to what became an issue of great concern later when Mexico submitted bids to host the Olympic Games. But the Central American and Caribbean Games preceded all the later discussions. As Brundage said:

The circumstance that Mexico has been, on this occasion, the grave (resting place) of 28 Central American records, constitutes by itself a well-deserved praise for the good technical conditions of the several stadia and sport grounds; it is also a complete answer (fortunately for Mexico) to the doubts expressed some times about the difficulties, from a sport point of view, of contending at the altitude of the City of Mexico (about 7340 feet above sea level), considered by some unfavorable for the visiting athletes who dwell nearer sea level. The confirmation that the Olympic Games may be held normally, not only at sea level but at an altitude of 7000-odd feet, serves to strengthen the expression adopted as a motto by the International Olympic Committee, and thence, by the Olympic movement in the whole world: *Citius, Altius, Fortius*.⁴⁵

Although Flores was no longer officially involved in the organization of the two events after his resignation in 1953, as a dedicated man for the development of sport in his country and proud IOC member, he did not sever his connection with either organization. He attended the VIIth Central American and Caribbean Games and, after the event, he assiduously contacted Brundage regarding the preparations for the Pan-American Games.

Flores updated Brundage on the progress of the preparations in Mexico and was confident that, despite the political motive of his resignation, the organizing committee of the second Pan-American Games was in good hands:

The Mexican Government accepts and gives its almost unlimited support to the II Panamerican Games, having selected a person to take charge, whose enthusiasm and references are of the biggest degree. Although I do not know this gentleman personally, yet all who do, coincide that he is a veteran sportsman, honest, complete, an organizer and the only thing he will need is all the support he can possibly get. The Mexican

⁴⁵ Avery Brundage, The VIIth Central American Games, *Olympic Review*, No. 47, August-September 1954, p. 20. Parentheses mine.

President put his entire confidence in the selected man, who is Senator Guzman Willis.⁴⁶

Manuel Guzman Willis participated as an athlete in the First Central American Games in 1926. Flores' confidence on the new designated president of the Pan-American Organizing Committee seemed to rely on his colleague Marte R. Gomez. Writing to Brundage, Gomez described Willis as "100% amateur sportsman,"⁴⁷ and a "personal friend."⁴⁸ He added:

General Clark and myself are planning to give our assistance if needed or, in any case, not to interfere with the organization or with the gentlemen in charge of them (the Pan-American Games).⁴⁹

Flores conferred with Gomez. He reported to Gomez that he passed on to Willis all of Brundage's suggestions about the opening ceremony, the closing of the event, along with the rules for regional games established in Helsinki. Working in close connection with Gomez, Flores further clarified that their suggestions and recommendations as IOC members to the new leader of the second Pan-American Organizing Committee were subject to acceptance, but their help would be "sincere, loyal, and disinterested."⁵⁰

Far different from the inaugural event, operational issues did not pose major challenges for the Mexican Olympic Committee in the organization of the second Pan-American Games. The internal politics in Mexico seem to have maintained a certain distance from the organizing committee. However, external political situations reflected on the preparations of the 1955 Pan-American Games.

⁴⁶ José J. Clark Flores to Avery Brundage, 5 July 1954, ABC, Box 204, reel 118.

⁴⁷ Marte R. Gomez to Avery Brundage, 8 June 1954, ABC, Box 204, reel 118.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

On 18 November 1954 Brundage wrote to Gomez and Flores to inquiry them the situation of the Cuban NOC and the participation of that country in the 1955 Pan-American Games. Formed in 1937, the Cuban Olympic Committee (COC) had long been bound to the Cuban government. A law existed that placed the composition of the COC in the hands of the Minister of Education. The actions of Fulgencio Batista's government in 1953 featured a strong effort to command national sports organizations. Brundage asked the two Mexican IOC members to contact the Pan-American Organizing Committee, urging them to enforce Rule 25 strictly or "the whole structure of organized international amateur sport will be destroyed if countries are permitted to ignore this particularly significant rule."⁵¹ At that time, Rule No. 25 established that "National Olympic Committees must be completely independent and autonomous and entirely removed from political, religious or commercial influence."⁵²

Originally, Cuban IOC member Miguel A. Moenck⁵³ had attempted to draw the COC away from the jurisdiction of the Minister of Education forging the formation of a COC independent from the government and in accordance with the IOC laws. However, on 19 September 1954, a second COC was constituted

⁵¹ Brundage to Marte R. Gomez and Jose de J. Clark Flores, 18 November 1954, ABC, Box 52, Reel 31.

⁵² See International Olympic Committee, *Olympic Rule No. 25*, May 1954, Athens. Available at: http://www.olympic.org/Documents/Olympic%20Charter/Olympic_Charter_through_time/1954-Olympic_Charter-Olympic_Rule_Nr25.pdf. Accessed on 8 August 2015.

⁵³ Moenck was prominent in both the regulation and administration of the Cuban Olympic Committee. He was co-opted to the IOC in 1938 and became an IOC member of some repute; both able and reliable. In the 1953 IOC Session in Mexico City, he was elected to the IOC Executive Committee, the first Latin American to earn the distinction. Moenck was a trusted link to Latin America for the IOC President, Avery Brundage, and the pair shared a long cooperative and friendly relationship. They worked together on a commission formed by Sigfrid Edström in 1949, to investigate the preparations of the Guatemalan Olympic Committee for the Central American and Caribbean Games of 1950. See: Toby C. Rider, "From Resistance to Revolution: The Struggle for Control of the Cuban Olympic Committee, 1953-1964," *Olympika: International Journal of Olympic Studies* 18, (2009): 57-98.

by Cuba's Minister of Education.⁵⁴ It was Flores who responded to Brundage's inquiries about such problems. On 29 November 1954 Flores ruefully conceded "that approval of the Cuban Government, the Cuban National Olympic Committee was reorganized without giving full consideration to the Olympic Rule No. 25."⁵⁵

Flores related to Brundage that Mexican members of the IOC reunited with Miguel A. Moenck and other members of Cuba's "old" NOC to examine the situation. The translated letter from the Avery Brundage Collection is, in some ways, confusing, but, in general, Flores reported the opinion of the Latin American IOC members on the issue requesting Brundage's direct intervention in the case:

We think that if you were able to explain verbally your responsibility as President of the International Olympic Committee, (it would) confirm your decision with the Olympic Rules, and by that you would be obliged not to recognize the new Cuban Olympic Committee. This very serious warning will draw serious consideration and force the Cuban officials to look for modifications, placing the Cuban Olympic Committee within the Olympic Regulations.⁵⁶

Flores then offered the perspective of the Latin American IOC members involved in the case by signaling that "sometimes, in Latin America quarrels, the important thing is not the decision to be taken."⁵⁷ He suggested that the better option was to come to an agreement with sport organizations in Cuba:

What we have to face, unfortunately, is a division. Some Cuban Federations are already associated with the new Cuban Olympic Committee, which means that committee has some bases for legality. The most important thing is to come to an agreement with all the federations to obtain the reorganization or reconstitution of the Cuban

⁵⁴ Rider, "From Resistance to Revolution," p. 62.

⁵⁵ José J. Clark Flores to Avery Brundage, 29 November 1954, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁵⁶ José J. Clark Flores to Avery Brundage, 29 November 1954, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118. Parentheses mine.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Olympic Committee exactly in accordance with the Olympic Rule No. 25.⁵⁸

Flores hoped that Brundage's intervention would be effective. He went further to recommend:

Perhaps a personal communication between you and the President of Cuba would be the best. Cubans, as many other Latin Americans, are proud people and perhaps to pay a visit to General Batista would bring comfort, peace and friendship for everyone. Nevertheless, if all fails, it will be clearly understood that we will send official notification to the Organizing Committee announcing that Cuban athletes will not be allowed to compete in Mexico. But, let us try to avoid a fight, showing once more the sincerity of our wishes to enforce the application of the Olympic Rules without harming anybody in any way.⁵⁹

After acknowledging receipt of Flores' letter, Brundage deferred contacting Cuba's president directly. Instead, he pointed out the errors of the Mexican Pan-American organizing committee. He wrote:

I am in complete sympathy with your point of view and I hope that an amicable solution can be found to the situation in Cuba. Apparently, they are having trouble in Guatemala also, where I note from a newspaper clipping, that the sports organizations have suspended all activities because the government has attempted to take control. Just last week I received a communication from our United States Department of State informing me that the United States Government had received an invitation to participate in the Second Pan American Games. In this letter they stated that the United States Government, of course, would not participate and that it was a matter for the United States Olympic Association. The fact that the Mexican Government has sent invitations to the governments rather than the National Olympic Committees may have led to some of our difficulties. In our rules for Regional Games we will have to provide in the future that invitations are sent to N.O.Cs and not to Governments.⁶⁰

Following intense debates between Cuban authorities, the leaders of the Cuban national sport federations gathered in early January 1954 to elect the officers of the COC. Although the intrigues of the government were obvious, the issue was

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Avery Brundage to José J. Clark Flores, 20 December, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

settled. Cuba participated in the 1955 Pan-American Games with a newly constituted COC.⁶¹ Brundage considered the settlement a “notable victory for the Olympic Movement.”⁶² He affirmed that such precedent could be most helpful in other similar cases in the future.

Contrasting his lack of information provided by the Argentinean Olympic Committee concerning the preparations of the first Pan-American Games in 1951, Brundage was heartened by updated information of the progress made by the organizing committee of the second Games. On 22 December 1954 the secretary of the Mexican Pan-American organizing committee, Manuel Aguilar Herrera, sent a report to Brundage detailing the final accomplishments of the committee. The report included the reassurance of the Government that the facilities and “moral and economic support”⁶³ were ready for the event. For publicity, Herrera reported that more than fifty-two hundred copies of the official poster and thousands of bulletins had been printed and distributed monthly to NOCs of the Western Hemisphere (see Figure 13).

⁶¹ For detailed information on the struggle for control of the Cuban Olympic Committee, see: Rider, “From Resistance to Revolution,” p. 57-97.

⁶² Miguel A. Moenck to Avery Brundage, 7 January 1955, ABC, Box 60, Reel 36.

⁶³ Manuel Aguilar Herrera, *Report to Mr. Avery Brundage, President of the IOC*, 22 December 1954, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

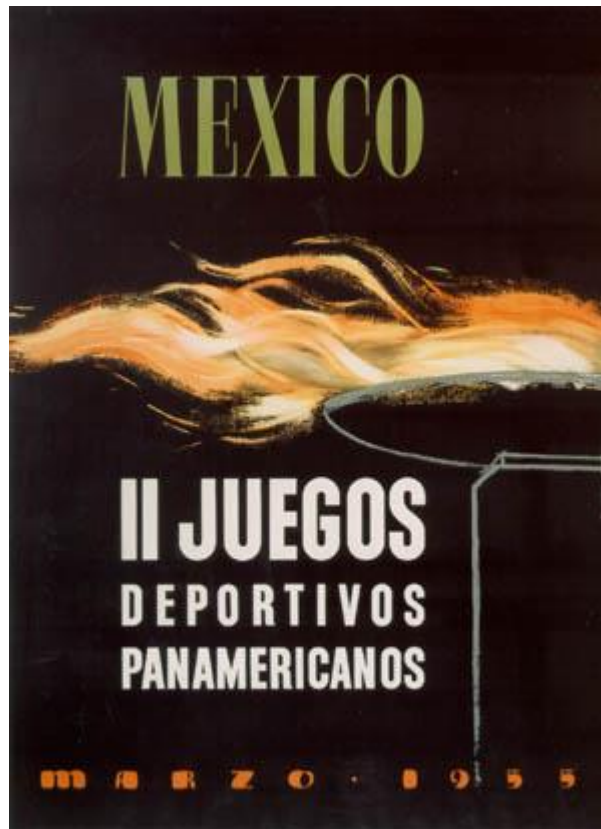


Figure 13 - The artist Rueda-Tapia designed this poster to popularize the Games. On a black background, a wind-whipped flame burns from a stylized cauldron placed on the right side of the poster.⁶⁴

Herrera also reported that three missions, “comprising persons of wide experience in athletic matters,”⁶⁵ visited South America, Central America, the United States, and Canada, conversing with government authorities as well as athletic officials, “for the purpose of insuring the greatest possible number of participants.”⁶⁶

Though eager for securing a great number of participants, the organizing committee emphasized that it had “strictly observed the provisions and

⁶⁴ “The Spirit of Friendship Through Sports: Poster Images from the Pan-American Games, 1951-1999,” copyright of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles, 1999 and LA84 Foundation, 2007. LA84 foundation website, <http://www.la84.org/the-spirit-of-friendship-through-sports-poster-images-from-the-pan-american-games-1951-1999>. Accessed on 3 September 2015.

⁶⁵ Manuel Aguilar Herrera, *Report to Mr. Avery Brundage, President of the IOC*, 22 December 1954, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

regulations of the IOC concerning Regional Games, and had taken due notice of the amendment to Rule No. 25 adopted at the session of the IOC in Athens, in May 1954.”⁶⁷ The report concluded with the statement that “all measures necessary were taken to insure success for the Second Pan American Games.”⁶⁸

Brundage was pleased with the report. He seemed certain of the success of the second Pan-American Games. On 31 December 1954, Brundage wrote to Aguilar

This will acknowledge and thank you for the report on the preparations for the Segundos Juegos Deportivos Panamericanos dated December 22, 1954, which was delivered to me by General Jose de J. Clark F. Apparently, arrangements have been very thoroughly made and I compliment you on the fine progress you have made. I anticipate after reading your report carefully that the Games next March will be the greatest international sport festival ever held in Western Hemisphere. We are greatly indebted to the amateur sportsman of Mexico who, having been given fine support and encouragement by their Government, have been able to arrange this outstanding event.⁶⁹

The second Pan-American Games opened on 12 March 1955 in the University Stadium (now Olympic Stadium) in Mexico City. In front of a crowd of 100,000 spectators, 2,583 athletes from twenty one nations marched into the stadium and formed ranks upon the infield. The ceremony opened with an invocation, and a large chorus rendered the national anthem of Mexico, after which Manuel Guzman Willis delivered an address. Contrary to rule 10 of the Helsinki meeting, “a golden flame arose from the Pan-America torch,”⁷⁰ and dozens of doves were released skyward. Twenty-one guns saluted the event as Mexico’s President Ruiz Cortines strode forward and raised the country’s flag.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Avery Brundage to Manuel Aguilar Herrera, 31 December 1954, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁷⁰ United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1956 Olympic Book: quadrennial report*, p.293.

He opened the Games “in the name of fraternity of the Americas, liberty, and peace.”⁷¹

In general, the event was a great success. Over one and a half million tickets were distributed free to the Mexican public, and “virtually every venue was packed with enthusiastic fans.”⁷² However, not everything was positive in the event. John T. McGovern, USOC counselor to the Pan-American Games, mentioned “individual incidents of dispute with roused tempers.”⁷³ He reported:

Our Southern friends are inclined to give more attention on occasions to politeness and social demonstrations than to dig in and get the job done without delay...On my arrival I found our Southern friends had not yet discovered that we knew best from our superior experience what to do and how to do it and that our aggressive approach was animated purely by a wish to be useful and helpful to them.⁷⁴

During the IVth Pan-American Congress (held in conjunction with the Pan-American Games), IOC members and Latin American sport leaders conversed about the future of sport and the Olympic Movement in the region. The Congress approved Flores’ suggestion to recognize the acronym ODEPA – Organización Deportiva Panamericana, as the official name of the institution.

Avery Brundage attended the Congress and announced that he looked forward to further expansion of the Olympic Movement in Latin America:

You will find the Olympic flag flying at the Stadium for these games are held under the patronage of the International Olympic Committee and in conformity with its regulations. The I.O.C. looks with favor on these Regional Games since they bring to the attention of additional thousands of people, competitors and spectators alike, the high principles of the idealistic Olympic Movement.⁷⁵

Brundage, in one of his last statements as president of PASO, emphasized:

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ John T. McGovern, *Report on the Pan American Games by Counselor*. In United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1956 Olympic Book: quadrennial report*, p.294.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 294.

⁷⁵ Speech of President Avery Brundage given on 3 January 1955 at the IVth Pan-American Sport Congress in Mexico, *Olympic Review*, No. 51, August 1955, p.27.

Latin Americans should be strong supporters of Amateurism because of their great love for liberty and freedom. One great difference between professional athletes and amateurs is that amateurs are free and professionals are not, they are the property of the one who pays them. National Olympic Committees according to Olympic rules must be free, independent, and autonomous. Obviously, no national organization can resist effectively if its government seeks to take control and use sport as a political instrument for either personal or national aggrandizement. But countries without free and independent athletic organizations lose the benefit of international recognition and consequently the privilege of this sort of competition for its athletes.

Analyzing the context of the preparations for the 1955 Pan-American Games,

Brundage continued:

This must be explained to governments that seek to impose political control on their sport organizations. Governments should initiate and carry on programs of physical culture, recreation, and health for their citizens but complete independent control of competitive amateur sport both national and international, must be left with the national federations and National Olympic Committees. You can see an example of this happy state of affairs here in Mexico, where President Ruiz Cortinez and his Government made an appropriation and turned it over to Senator Willis and his organizing committee to be used without political interference of any kind. . . . It is your obligation to keep the Pan-American Games free from dollar signs and from political intrigue.⁷⁶

During the Congress, Douglas F. Roby, then serving as vice-president of the United States Olympic Committee, was elected the new president of the Pan-American Sport Organization for the 1955-1959 term. In other matters, Cleveland triumphed over Guatemala City and Rio de Janeiro to host the 3rd Pan-American Games. The festival was now in American hands.

Spectators at the closing ceremonies of the 1955 Pan-American Games witnessed an impressive pageant. In general, athletes, spectators, media, and organizers praised the facilities and organization of the events. The 1955 Pan-American Games offered a powerful precedent to the Mexican Committee,

⁷⁶ Ibid.

which ultimately led them to submit a serious bid for the 1960 Olympics. When that bid failed, they bid again for the 1968 Games, and won them. It seems fair to suggest that a pattern was established: successfully hosting the Pan-American Games boosted the interest and confidence of sport and political authorities of cities aspiring to host the Olympic Games.

“Looking after the child”: the Pan-American Games struggle for survival

Cleveland’s Pan-American Organizing Committee was formed and commenced to function during the latter part of 1955. In the organizational structure, officials gathered together an influential group of prominent citizens to support Cleveland’s preparations. Plans and specifications were prepared on several important facilities for the various sports in the Pan-American program. Major attention was focused upon new facilities, including a large new stadium for track and field events, as well as for swimming and diving competitions.⁷⁷

Weeks after the completion of the 1955 Games in Mexico City, Douglas F. Roby visited Cleveland with USOC President Kenneth L. “Tug” Wilson and several members of the United States Olympic Executive Committee. The group met with the Mayor of Cleveland, Anthony Joseph Celebrezze, and other city officials. Roby reported:

We sensed a certain degree of apathy toward the proposed Pan American Games, but we were given definite assurance by officials and important citizens of Cleveland that they would do all possible to counteract any such sentiment.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Douglas F. Roby, *Report by the USOC Vice-President*. In United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1956 Olympic Book*, p.26.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

It was estimated that the cost of all new facilities would approximate US\$11 million. Roby provided details of the financing plan:

\$2,000,000.00 from the city of Cleveland, \$3,000,000.00 from Cuyahoga County, \$1,000,000.00 from the state of Ohio, and \$5,000,000.00 from the Federal Government. The \$5,000,000.00 proposed to be obtained from the Federal Government was approved by both Houses of Congress in their 1956 session, and was placed in the budget for final approval in early 1957.⁷⁹

The plan seemed too ambitious. In fact, depending upon a \$5 million contribution from the U.S. government was “a fantasy that completely ignored the history of federal refusal to directly fund Olympic-style sport competitions unconnected to world’s fairs.”⁸⁰ It is worth mentioning that such history goes back to and was deeply implicated in the transfer of the 1904 Chicago Olympics to St. Louis.⁸¹

The US\$5 million prompted the attention of local media in Cleveland. A journalist from the *Cleveland Press*, Henry N. Taylor, wrote to Brundage on 20 June 1956:

. . . On the subject of federal aid, I know how firmly the Olympic Committee have stood against subsidizing athletes. Do you believe a similar feeling would arise over federal subsidies to help a city build the house of the Games? For instance, do you know of any precedent whatever for federal aid for a host city in connection with international athletic events? Clevelanders are hoping for \$5 million in federal help. Their congressmen, notably Sen. George Bender, are pushing

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ John MacAloon, “Historical Erasure and Cold War Inter-American Relations: The Chicago 1959 Pan American Games,” *The International Journal of Sport History* (forthcoming), p.4. I am indebted to Professor John MacAloon, who generously responded to my email about the work he presented at the colloquium “Historicizing the Pan American Games” organized at the University of Toronto in April 2015. MacAloon shared with me his forthcoming publication examining the 1959 Chicago Pan-American Games framed by the interpretive problem of why these Games have been erased from Chicago’s civic memory and its candidature to host the 2016 Olympic Games.

⁸¹ For a detailed examination of the 1904 Olympic Games, see: Robert K. Barney, “Born from Dilemma: America Awakens to the Modern Olympic Games, 1901-1903,” *OLYMPIKA: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 1 (1992): 92-135. See also: John MacAloon, “The Chicago-St.Louis Transition and the Social Structuration of the American Olympic Movement,” in Russel Field (ed.), *Playing for Change: The Continuing Struggle for Sport and Physical Education: Essays in Honour of Bruce Kidd* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

legislation to get it. What we're trying to find out is: 1 – whether such help would be palatable to the amateur athletic leaders of the country, and 2/ if no federal aid comes, what steps a city takes to raise the money for itself without throwing the burden wholly on its taxpayers?⁸²

In response to Taylor's inquiries, Brundage wrote:

There would be no objection to Federal help for the City of Cleveland in connection with the Pan American Games (except from taxpayers and they don't count any more). Melbourne, for instance, in organizing the Games of the XVI Olympiad, which open next November, has received financial assistance from both Federal and State Governments. Los Angeles, in 1932, was given the proceeds of a State Bond Issue, which it repaid from gate receipts. Facilities for many of the Olympic and Regional Games have been financed at least partly by the Governments of countries in which the Games have been held. The objection to governmental aid by Olympic authorities does not apply to the provision of facilities, which is a legitimate governmental function.⁸³

However, Brundage went further making explicit that he opposed the idea of

Cleveland hosting the IIIrd Pan-American Games:

I fear the Pan American Games Committee acted somewhat precipitantly in awarding the Games to Cleveland before this major question of how the necessary funds are to be provided was answered. Even if the money was already in the bank, the time remaining is very short if the Games are to be organized properly so they will be a credit to the United States as well as to the City of Cleveland.⁸⁴

In fact, writing to Roby a year earlier, Brundage had already indicated that

hosting the Pan-American Games in Cleveland would be challenging:

It was a very considerable achievement to obtain the III Pan American Games for the city of Cleveland and I think I can safely say a great surprise. I didn't think it possible and I wonder whether there is a full realization of the responsibilities that have been assumed and the tremendous amount of work and money that will be required to make these Games a success. Having headed this enterprise for the first dozen years⁸⁵ of its existence, I am somewhat familiar with the difficulties that had to be overcome to bring the Games to their present position. Few people in the United States understand and appreciate the troubles that have been encountered, the conflict between Central American

⁸² Henry N. Taylor to Avery Brundage, 20 June 1956, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁸³ Avery Brundage to Henry N. Taylor, 8 July 1956, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Actually, Brundage was the president of PASO for fifteen years at that point.

Games, Bolivar Games, and South American championship contests, the delicate relationships which exist between countries and individuals that sometimes become bitter rivalries, and the great diplomacy required at all times. Every nation almost every individual is a separate problem.⁸⁶

Brundage also pointed out that all bulletins should be issued in two or three languages. He not only provided Roby with clues about how to handle issues in Latin America based on his own experience, but he also anticipated the complex problems related to the organization of the event. The advising character of his letter may be clearly perceived below:

When you consider the inexperience in handling huge international events of both Organizing Committees and the youth of this enterprise, the Games in Buenos Aires and Mexico City must be considered extremely successful. I can tell you that both of them involved four long years of hard work in obtaining, first the facilities, second the organization, and third the entries. It is naturally expected that the Third Games will be much better than the first two, particularly since they are to be held in this country.⁸⁷

Besides the common understanding that each Games should be better than the previous, Brundage noted that hosting the event in the United States increased the expectations surrounding the event. He did not explain the reasoning of his thoughts, but since he was referring to the experience of hosting and organizing sporting events, his argument might be related to the fact that the U.S. had hosted previous international sport events before, and its main sporting organizing bodies had long been established.

Brundage's letter from 1955 did not question Cleveland's potential to host the hemispheric event, but it raised concerns based on his analysis of the amount of work that needed to be done. Considering the lack of facilities and

⁸⁶ Avery Brundage to Douglas F. Roby, 16 August 1955, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

the short time, Brundage said, “work should be started immediately.”⁸⁸ He pointed out:

If in Cleveland there are not improved facilities and better organization, and a greater participation, it will be a severe blow to the prestige, not only of the United States Olympic Association, the Amateur Athletic Union, and all other sport organisations, but to the United States itself, and in addition, a tremendous setback to the Pan American Games themselves. . . . Skilled and efficient personnel are not easy to find. I suggest that this is a most important assignment and no time should be lost if you wish to prevent these Games from being a colossal flop.⁸⁹

Roby responded on 19 August 1955. He informed Brundage that since his first trip to Cleveland in May, he was in touch with the Mayor and officials in regard to progress of the organization of the IIIrd Pan-American Games. In fact, Roby was in Cleveland when he received Brundage’s letter. Roby immediately responded reporting that he had met with several authorities, including Mayor Celebrezze, and they discussed for approximately an hour and a half all the phases of the proposed Games, drawing a tentative organization chart. Based on that meeting Roby said: “I am convinced that it is the intention of these men to proceed with all haste in preparation for the IIIrd Pan-American Games.”⁹⁰

Confident in the organization of the event in Cleveland, Roby challenged Brundage’s alarm:

From the fears which you have expressed to me personally, and in writing, I am beginning to believe that you have somewhat of a defeatist attitude regarding the ability of most of our principal cities in the United States to organize either the Pan American Games or the Olympic Games. I hope and believe that your fears, and any which we may have, are unwarranted. I cannot make myself believe that some of our United States cities have not the necessary resources to organize either of these Games. I shall report to you upon my return from Cleveland.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Douglas F. Roby to Avery Brundage, 19 August 1955, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁹¹ Ibid.

Copies of tense correspondence between Brundage and Roby were sent to several USOC officials, namely, Bingham, Daniel Ferris, and Kenneth. L.

Wilson. On 31 August 1955 Brundage responded:

My letter to you was not written in an official capacity, but as an American citizen who is proud of the record of the United States in international sport, and desirous of seeing that record maintained. I have no "defeatist attitude" concerning the resources of our cities, I do know, however, that there is a general ignorance of the magnitude of the task of organizing Olympic and Regional Games, and that there are only a limited number of individuals with the knowledge and experience necessary to handle an enterprise of this kind in a manner which will be a credit to the United States of America.⁹²

Roby continued to send Brundage reports on the situation in Cleveland. Despite Roby's generally upbeat, Brundage was dissatisfied with what he presumed to be months of inactivity on the part of Cleveland officials. He emphasized:

Thanks for your report on the Cleveland situation. I am glad you are on the job. As I said some time ago, I have very little confidence in this arrangement and I am sure you are going to have many headaches. Sooner or later you will probably have to fix a deadline for them to submit a complete plan of operation, indicating the sources of money required and the individuals who will compose the organization. To stage these Games successfully is a huge operation and I doubt if they have the faintest idea in Cleveland of what they have undertaken to do.⁹³

As time passed, difficulties continued to emerge. When it became apparent that Cleveland was not to obtain the Federal assistance which they had anticipated, Roby admitted that his confidence was giving way to the search for an alternative plan. In August 1956 Enrique C. Aguirre, Chancellor of the Pan-American Sport Organization, reported to Brundage that Roby addressed letters

⁹² Avery Brundage to Douglas F. Roby, 31 August 1955, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁹³ Avery Brundage to Douglas F. Roby, 1 November 1955, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

to Guatemala, Santiago de Chile, and São Paulo, asking officials in confidence to bid for the Games.⁹⁴ However, Roby told a different story to Brundage:

We have recently received inquiries from both Brazil and Guatemala, and both have expressed a desire to stage the III Pan American Games in the event that the City of Cleveland relinquishes them. I will not recite a history of our experiences with the City of Cleveland since they were awarded the Games in March, 1955, except to say that a Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Pan American Sports Organization held in Los Angeles June 25th and 26th, we adopted a resolution wherein we advised the City of Cleveland that unless they submitted a satisfactory plan for financing the Games by August 15th, it would be necessary for us to assign the Games elsewhere.⁹⁵

Brundage replied to Aguirre and later to Roby. The paragraph underlined below appeared verbatim in both letters:

If I am not mistaken, I said to you when you were elected in Mexico City, that you had been handed a rough and almost impossible assignment. Of course, it is none of my business, but since I have been called the father of these Games, I would be sad if they had to be abandoned because of lack of interest in this country. I hope that you can find a solution to the situation.⁹⁶

In disagreement Aguirre wrote:

I am highly appreciative of your note of August 23rd with regard to the III Pan American Games, and I beg to differ with you in that it is definitely of your business to look after these Pan American Games, because you are their father and the child should be looked after. I can assure you that we are doing our utmost to nurse the creature. Now that you have full information, what is your honest opinion with regard to the Games, and what suggestions do you have?⁹⁷

In early 1957 there was a strong movement in the United States to reduce taxes. The result was that the US\$5 million that the city of Cleveland had expected to obtain, became a point of controversy in the National Budget.

⁹⁴ Enrique C. Aguirre to Avery Brundage, 16 August 1956, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁹⁵ Douglas F. Roby to Avery Brundage, 17 August 1956, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

⁹⁶ Avery Brundage to Douglas F. Roby, 23 August 1956, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118. Emphasis is mine.

⁹⁷ Enrique C. Aguirre to Avery Brundage, 28 August 1956, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118

Additionally, one of the Senators from the State of Ohio took a strong position against this item remaining in the budget.⁹⁸

Even though it was unlikely that Cleveland would obtain the funds to host the 1959 Pan-American Games, there was some action on the part of Cleveland's officials. A small delegation visited Central and South America to invite teams to participate in the Games. Brundage was concerned about their approach. On 3 April 1957 he wrote to Roby:

A letter to me from Latin America indicates that two Emissaries from Cleveland are traveling through Central and South America in connection with the Third Pan American Games. Apparently, instead of going directly to the Olympic Committee and the Federations in the various countries, they are acting through Government. This is the very thing we have been trying to stop for many years. In some of these countries there has been a tendency to schedule sport events through diplomatic channels rather than through the amateur sport governing bodies. We have had several bitter battles on this subject and have had to refuse to recognize certain countries as a result. It is unfortunate that the Cleveland Committee has made such an approach since one of our fundamental principles is to keep amateur sport free from politics.⁹⁹

If in Latin America the interference of politics in the preparations for sporting events might be due to ignorance, Brundage demonstrated that in the United States that kind of mistake was not be acceptable.

At that point, Roby was expecting worse. On 16 March 1957 he called a special session of the Pan-American Sport Organization to be held in Caracas, Venezuela. At the session, PASO officials reviewed the situation and adopted a resolution setting 17 April 1957 as the absolute deadline when the city of Cleveland must show positive arrangement for all finances. During the same session, the Congress approved Guatemala City as first alternate, and Rio de Janeiro as the second. Then, on 9 April 1957, Roby wrote:

⁹⁸ Douglas F. Roby, *Report by the USOC Vice-President*. In United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1956 Olympic Book*, p.26.

⁹⁹ Avery Brundage to Douglas F. Roby, 3 April 1957, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

Before the week is over, I have very good reason to believe that we will have official Notice from the City of Cleveland to the effect that they are giving up and abandoning any idea of staging the III Pan American Games. . . . During the past few months, I have made several trips to Washington and Cleveland in an effort to save the situation for Cleveland and the United States if possible. As stated above, I now am quite certain that this is all for a lost cause.¹⁰⁰

In that same letter, for the first time, Chicago emerged as a possible substitute host of the IIIrd Pan-American Games. Roby said:

On March 20th, shortly after my return from Caracas, I received the following message from the Mayor of your home city, Chicago: Chicago, the heart of the Middle United States, would be highly honored to be designated as host city for the Pan American Games in 1959. We have all facilities needed. Games would be a major feature in our celebration of completion of Saint Lawrence Waterway.¹⁰¹

However, Roby stated that it was “unlikely”¹⁰² that PASO could seriously consider Chicago’s invitation.

On 10 April 1957 the Cleveland Committee received word from Washington that federal aid was definitely not forthcoming. The city of Cleveland formally relinquished the IIIrd Pan-American Games on 17 April 1957. Immediately, officials from Guatemala informed Roby that, because a national election was scheduled for the spring of 1959, they would not be in a position to stage the Games as they had anticipated. Rio de Janeiro also relinquished its rights as second alternate.

Writing to the USOC president, Kenneth L. Wilson, Roby reported that he had telephone conversations with officials from Chicago and Philadelphia regarding the possibility of hosting the Pan-American Games. At the end of April, the interest expressed by the Mayor of Chicago, Richard J. Daley, became the best option against the Pan-American Games having an early

¹⁰⁰ Douglas F. Roby to Avery Brundage, 9 April 1957, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

demise. Roby mentioned that if PASO received proposals from more than one city in the United States, he expected that the USOC “should decide upon and make some sort of recommendation to the Pan American Sports Organization as to which United States City should be endorsed.”¹⁰³ Roby continued: “I do not wish to introduce politics into the selection of a city.”¹⁰⁴

Brundage followed the discussions about where to host the 1959 Pan-American Games. While PASO’s president and his direct assistants were disturbed by the developments related to the realization of the third Pan-American Games, Latin American José de J. Clark Flores was emerging as a determined and uncompromising leader of the Pan-American cause. Flores continually engaged in PASO’s actions, writing to Roby on every matter and corresponding with Brundage. The latter regretted that the “Games should never have been awarded to Cleveland in the first place,”¹⁰⁵ recognizing and hoping that Flores’ efforts “to keep these Games alive would not be in vain.”¹⁰⁶ In fact, Flores was vehemently offering help in all matters related to the organization of the Games. In 1958, seeking to publicize the IIIrd Pan-American Games and assess the conformity of NOCs to the Olympic regulations, Flores “spontaneously offered to make a visit to each one of the Central American and Caribbean countries at his own expense to endeavor to bring a little order out of the chaos.”¹⁰⁷ In fact, Flores was building a strong reputation. Enrique C. Aguirre recognized:

As you know, General Clark has had a deep interest in the development of both the Central American and Pan American Games. He is well

¹⁰³ Douglas F. Kirby to Kenneth L. Wilson, 19 April 1957, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Avery Brundage to José de J. Clark Flores, 13 May 1957, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Enrique C. Aguirre to Avery Brundage, 8 October 1958, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

known and commands the high regard and confidence of the sports authorities in these and many other countries.¹⁰⁸

When the IIIrd Pan-American Games seemed an unpromising endeavor, two cities submitted proposals to host the Games: Chicago and São Paulo. Thus, a second special congress was called by the Pan-American Sports Organization. The second special congress was held in San José, Costa Rica, on 3 August 1957. Its specific purpose was to review proposals from cities interested in hosting the IIIrd Pan-Am. Chicago was represented by Michael J. McDemott, Chicago Chairman; Alderman Ralph Metcalf, former U.S. Olympic sprinter; and Jack Reilly, Chicago's Director of special events. Reilly campaigned vigorously to get Chicago selected as host city. He estimated that to stage the classic sports in the program would cost the city approximately a half million dollars, which he believed that gate receipts and the influx of visitors would cover. Reilly asserted that housing the athletes was not expected to be a major problem because accommodations would be provided by Northwestern University, University of Chicago, Loyola, Illinois Tech, Fort Sheridan, and similar institutions. In a secret ballot, Chicago received 13 votes, and São Paulo (a replacement for Rio de Janeiro) received six votes.

Richard Daley, the Mayor of Chicago, wrote to Brundage:

Chicago would be honored if you will consent to accept a place on the Honorary Committee for the 1959 Pan American Games. President Eisenhower has accepted the chairmanship of this committee. The Governors of the six Midwest states have also accepted committee membership.¹⁰⁹

On 29 August 1957 Brundage wrote to Daley responding to the invitation and reminding the Mayor of the purposes of the Games:

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Richard Daley to Avery Brundage, 27 August 1957, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

Chicago is acting as host for the III Pan American Games to be held in 1959, has an excellent opportunity to advance the cause of amateur sport with its high ideals and to promote Western Hemisphere good will. If this is accomplished successfully it will be of great benefit in many ways to the City. I shall be glad to assist in any way I can and it will be a pleasure to serve on your Honorary Committee.¹¹⁰

Daley constantly reiterated his commitment to stage the Games. In the letters he addressed to Brundage, he did not mention the high ideals or the potential of the Games to foster good will, but instead emphasized his belief that the hemispheric event would be an “opportunity (for Chicago) to gain acceptance as the cultural and industrial center of the Americas.”¹¹¹

With the IIIrd Pan-American Games officially awarded to Chicago, Douglas F. Roby wrote: “Chicago’s acceptance as host for 1959 Pan American Games puts the events on sound footing.”¹¹² Roby mentioned that PASO’s officials predicted a “greater-than-ever success”¹¹³ for the event which was second only to the Olympic Games in prestige and magnitude. However, following the initial effort to win the right to host the Games, Chicago energies caused Brundage, Roby and other PASO’s officials concern. Brundage was particularly apprehensive:

Fresh from the III Asian Games, staged with such great success in Tokyo which you witnessed partly, although you missed the spectacular closing ceremony, one of the finest events of its kind I have seen anywhere, I want to express my disappointment and concern over the preparations for the III Pan American Games to be staged in Chicago in August 1959. Since the International Olympic Committee gives its patronage but does not sponsor these Games, I am writing not as its President but as one of the founders and the first president for fifteen years of the Pan American Games Organization. This organization was a feeble infant, but we carefully nursed it through the war, revived it after

¹¹⁰ Avery Brundage to Richard Daley, Mayor of Chicago, 29 August 1957, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

¹¹¹ Richard Daley to Avery Brundage, 15 April 1958, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

¹¹² Douglas F. Roby, “Chicago’s acceptance as host for 1959 Pan American Games puts events on sound footing,” *United States 1956 Olympic Book*, p.390.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

the war, and staged with considerable success, all things considered, the first Pan American Games in Buenos Aires and the second in Mexico. From all I can ascertain, it seems to me that the III Pan American Games are going to be the most dismal fiasco in the history of international sport. Unless some drastic action is taken immediately, the Pan American Games idea will die in an ignominious death right here in Chicago.¹¹⁴

Brundage assuaged Roby by saying that he knew that those in charge of PASO had the best of intentions, but presumed that it was Chicago officials who had not “the faintest idea of the magnitude of the task they have assumed.”¹¹⁵

For many years, Brundage handled the IOC, PASO, and coordinated other sport administrative matters from his office in Chicago’s LaSalle Hotel. At that moment, he was in the position to say without equivocation that:

This will not only be a disgrace to the City of Chicago but also to the United States itself, as well as to all US amateur sport organizations including the national amateur sport federations, the Amateur Athletic Union, and the United States Olympic Association. . . .It would be far better that the Games should not be held at all than to have them staged in a slipshod manner.¹¹⁶

Abandoning the Games not only occurred to Brundage, but also to Roby, Enrique C. Aguirre, and other PASO officials such as Miguel Moenck. Writing on 30 June 1958, Roby stated that he was about to advise the Chicago Organizing Committee “that the III Pan American Games be abandoned.”¹¹⁷ Roby explained that he decided not to do so because such a public action would certainly result in bad publicity and completely diminish chances that Chicago might had for staging the Games. Roby stated:

I would also like to see the Chicago Organizing Committee entirely removed from the City Hall. As you know, we have made these suggestions to Col. Reilly on numerous occasions, and on two different

¹¹⁴ Avery Brundage to Douglas F. Roby, 2 June, 1959, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Douglas F. Roby to Avery Brundage, 30 June 1958, Box 204, Reel 118.

occasions (to my knowledge) he has agreed with us - - - but thus far has done nothing.¹¹⁸

How would it be possible to save the Pan-American Games? Brundage, Roby and PASO's officials were worn out with the obstacles that confronted the realization of the third Pan-American Games. In April 1959, still impressed with the organization of the continental Games held in Tokyo, Brundage invited Jack Reilly, Kenneth Wilson and anyone involved in the organizing committee of the 1959 Pan-American to see a film of the IIIrd Asian Games, because he believed that "perhaps some ideas beneficial to the Pan American Games might be suggested by viewing it."¹¹⁹ There were other strategies, though. MacAloon has made the argument that Brundage had a definite role in pushing the 1959 Pan-American Organizing Committee to action. For MacAloon, Brundage used the same "tact" that credited him with saving the organization of the 1956

Melbourne Olympic Games. Such tact is described as follows:

In April 1955, on a visit to Australia to review preparations for the Melbourne Olympics, Brundage 'was appalled by what I found'. When he received no satisfactory answers from the organizing committee about the lack of planning, labor unrest, and construction delays, Brundage went to the press. He created a furor by announcing that these Games 'would make Melbourne and Australia ridiculous and contemptible in the eyes of the world'.

In August 1958 Brundage resorted to the same tactic in Chicago. He made public statements about the problems of the organizing committee, and appealed to the old diplomatic argument stating that if the organization of the 1959 Pan-American Games failed, both Chicago and the United States would

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Avery Brundage to Jack Reilly and Kenneth L. Wilson, 27 April 1959, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

be disgraced in the eyes of the world, and that U.S. relations with “Pan-American countries may suffer a severe blow.”¹²⁰

Chicago’s mayor and his committee tried to dampen criticism and save the Games. The organizing committee worked faithfully and, by December 1958, they announced that all facilities required for the Games would be ready in time.

In early 1959 a public fund drive was launched, seeking to raise UD\$250,000 in advance ticket revenues. However, total ticket revenues for the Chicago Pan-American Games were not revealed.¹²¹ According to MacAloon Chicago obtained US\$500,000 dollars from the Federal Government. He argued that Republican support was critical to get the proposal approved by the State Department. The bill was signed by President Eisenhower on 14 May 1959.¹²²

Although, based on Brundage’s understanding, political interference must be totally divorced from sporting events, the financial support of Governments for the preparations of Pan-American Games was something to be considered. It proved to be difficult finding the balance between having the financial support of governments without providing them a platform for political displays. The first three editions of the Pan-American Games experienced different approaches in organizing and executing the event. By analyzing Brundage’s correspondence and interactions, though he made no direct criticism of Peronist Argentina and its showcase of the country in the first Pan-American Games, he explicitly commented on Mexico’s success in the IInd Games.

¹²⁰ “Brundage Warns of ‘City’s Disgrace’ If 1959 Meet Fails’, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 29 August 1958.

¹²¹ MacAloon, “Historical Erasure and Cold War Inter-American Relations: The Chicago 1959 Pan American Games,” *The International Journal of Sport History* (forthcoming).

¹²² Ibid.

As the opening of the IIIrd Pan-American Games approached, Brundage constantly received inquiries from different authorities relative to the progress and details of the event. Although realization of the Games became certain, on more than one occasion Brundage attempted to distance himself from the event, answering queries addressed to him that he would forward such inquiries to the organizing committee since he had “no official connection with the organization of the Pan American Games.”¹²³ He did not consider that his honorary position as a member of the organizing committee gave him an authoritative or official status.

The Games opened on 27 August 1959 at Chicago’s Soldier Field. Some 2,263 athletes were present. More than 40,000 spectators attended the opening ceremony. The University of Chicago subsidized the athletes’ room and board. Dr. Milton Eisenhower, representing the United States on behalf of his brother, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, visited the stadium to welcome the contestants and to open the Games formally. The athletes and officials marched into the stadium and five thousand doves were released into the skies above the Windy City. Following protocol, a “Pan-American torch” lit the flame, which burned during the festival.¹²⁴

¹²³ Avery Brundage to Frank M. Stipe, 25 July 1959, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

¹²⁴ “Arrivals For Pan-American Games Grow,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Section IV, 22 August, 1959, p.3.

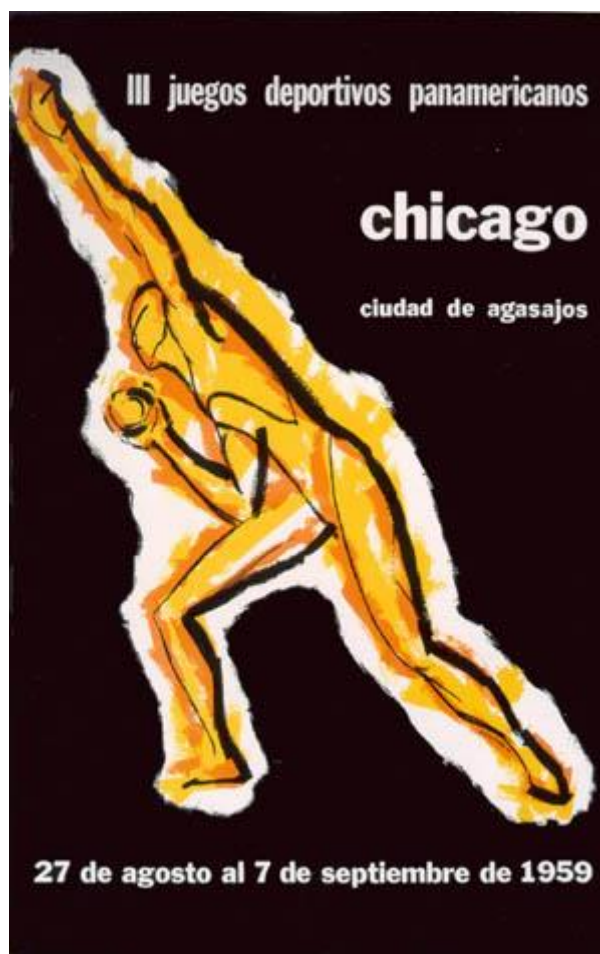


Figure 14 - African-American artist D.W. McIlvaine designed the lithograph poster. The Spanish-language poster features a stylized graphic figure in the act of performing the shot put. On the right, are the words “Chicago” and “ciudad de agasjos,” meaning “Chicago, city of hospitality.”¹²⁵

Roby, then president of PASO, considered the Games successful. He stated:

The Chicago Games, generally, were considered a fine success with real growth in PASO manifested, and were conducted in the best Olympic tradition. . . . Everything ran smoothly, with few exceptions, during the competitions.¹²⁶

However, such success was not deemed as consensual among sport leaders.

In the Avery Brundage Collection, negative comments written by Brundage

¹²⁵ “The Spirit of Friendship Through Sports: Poster Images from the Pan-American Games, 1951-1999,” copyright of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles, 1999 and LA84 Foundation, 2007. LA84 foundation website, <http://www.la84.org/the-spirit-of-friendship-through-sports-poster-images-from-the-pan-american-games-1951-1999>. Accessed on 3 September 2015.

¹²⁶ Douglas F. Roby, “Chicago Proved efficient Host in Staging Pan American Games Despite Time Handicap,” in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1960 Olympic Book*, p. 30.

regarding the opening ceremonies are found. He listed the following observations: “political introductions and speeches, rabble on the infield, badly organized parade, music inadequate, no discipline when teams lined up on the infield, sloppy appearance, non-attention when the oath was given.”¹²⁷

As MacAloon has observed, although the Cold War was ultimately destined to become a serious Inter-American affair, in the 1959 Pan-American Games that was not the case. No crowd exceeding 11,000 showed up for any day of Pan-American athletics in Chicago’s Soldier Field. MacAloon, however, noted that “one month before the Chicago Pan Ams, 54,380 people paid to see the two-day U.S. – U.S.S.R. dual track and field meet in Philadelphia’s Franklin Field.”¹²⁸

At the Congress of the Pan-American Sports Organization held prior to the opening of the Games in Chicago, José de J. Clark Flores of Mexico succeeded Douglas F. Roby of the United States as president of the organization. By a vote of 18 to 5 in a secret ballot to determine whether São Paulo, Brazil, or Winnipeg, Canada, would host the Games in 1963, São Paulo was awarded the host distinction. Alerted by the problems that occurred in Cleveland, PASO designated Winnipeg as the first alternate city.

On 7 September 1959 at the closing of the IIIrd Pan-American Games, athletes of competing countries lined up behind their national flags for the ceremonies in Chicago’s Soldier Field. Analyzing the coverage of the event, MacAloon found that a tragic incident marked the end of the 1959 Pan-American Games. He pointed out that when newspapers might, otherwise, have

¹²⁷ Avery Brundage, “Comments on the opening ceremony for III Pan American Games, Chicago,” 27 August 1959, ABC, Box 204, Reel 118.

¹²⁸ MacAloon, “Historical Erasure and Cold War Inter-American Relations: The Chicago 1959 Pan American Games,” *The International Journal of Sport History* (forthcoming).

been busy with post-Games analysis, they were consumed with a report that the Brazilian athlete Ronaldo Duncan Arantes, a 26 year old rower, was found shot through the heart on a lawn of the Naperville campus of North Central College, near the satellite Pan-American Village where he had been staying.

According to MacAloon:

A 38 caliber revolver was found next to the victim, whose clothes showed evidence of a struggle. In the weeks that ensued police speculation fueled by interviews with Arantes' brother Romulo, coach of the Brazilian team, centered variously on a gun purchase in Aurora that went awry, a prior dispute with a visiting Chilean student over a woman, and a rendezvous with unknown persons after a drinking session with the U.S. and Brazilian rowers in a Naperville bowling avenue tavern. The murder case was never solved, and made an eerie and inauspicious final punctuation to the 1959 Chicago Pan American Games.¹²⁹

With that aside, the new president of PASO brought great changes to the institution. Flores' friendship with Brundage developed considerably, and this reflected positively in his influence within the IOC and in PASO's future.

According to Flores' biographer, "Brundage showed respect and consideration for his capacity."¹³⁰

As president of PASO, Flores set forth two major goals: 1) to give the necessary consistency and strength to the organization in order to maintain recognition and obtain more support from the IOC; 2) to make the organization self-sufficient economically.¹³¹ As for the first goal, it is important to mention that the IOC Executive Committee consistently addressed the question the existence of "too many regional games,"¹³² and the possibility of withdrawing its

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Flores was an important figure in Mexico's quest and victory to host the Games of the XIXth Olympiad. Carmona, *Biography of Jose de Jesus Clark Flores*, p. 115.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² "IOC Executive Committee Minutes," Cortina D'Ampezzo, 49, 22 January 1956, in Wolf Lyberg, ed. *IOC Executive Committee Minutes*, Vol II (1948-1969).

patronage to such Games due to occurring “political involvements and for infractions against the IOC amateur rules.”¹³³

Flores established a permanent office for PASO in Mexico City. Under PASO's direction, he also promoted technical and scientific discussion and exchange of ideas between countries.

In dealing with political conflicts related to the Central American Games, the Pan-American Games and to the Olympic Games, Flores constantly sought ways to guarantee that all NOCs linked to PASO followed the IOC rules strictly. In 1966, for example, Flores intervened in a delicate situation. San Juan, Puerto Rico, an “unincorporated territory of the United States,”¹³⁴ also known as the “world's oldest colony,”¹³⁵ was the host city of the Xth Central American and Caribbean Games. It was a crucial time in Cold War history. The decision to host the event in San Juan itself was a result of labored discussions. A major controversy arose when Puerto Rican authorities denied visas to the Cuban delegation, alleging that its “presence alongside approximately twenty thousand very vocal Cuban exiles in Puerto Rico constituted a threat to the stability and security of the island.”¹³⁶ On several occasions Flores traveled from Puerto Rico to Cuba to interact with authorities towards finding a solution to the issue. Flores' intervention was definite to guarantee Cuba's participation in the Games.

Flores' dedication and hard work guaranteed his reelection as PASO's president. On 25 April 1966, during the IOC Executive Meeting, Flores was

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Antonio Sotomayor, “The Cold War Games of a colonial Latin American Nation,” in *Diplomatic Games: Sport, Statecraft, and International Relations since 1945*, edited by Heather Dichter and Andrew Johns (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2014), p. 217.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p.19.

¹³⁶ Ibid., p.220.

elected the IOC vice-president. In Flores, Brundage, in his busy years as IOC president, found an idealist, determined and proud IOC member to “nurse the creature” (the Pan-American Games). Despite his busy agenda and his frequent trips to Europe, Brundage followed the development of the Pan-American Games. He managed to attend every subsequent Games through those in 1971 (São Paulo 1963, Winnipeg 1967, and Cali 1971). The archival correspondence that Brundage maintained pertinent to these Games was largely limited to thank you letters to his hosts, usually including remindful remarks on the importance of maintaining the high ideals of amateur sports.

Chapter 5

The Pan-American Games Reach Maturity

In April 1961 José de Jesús Clark Flores issued a PASO bulletin to all NOCs in the Americas. The bulletin outlined the structure of the organization and emphasized its purpose to “favour and strengthen the Movement and the Olympic ideals through the strict observance of the principles upon which it is founded.”¹ Further, he implored NOCs to “improve the sport’s techniques of this Hemisphere.”² The original purpose of PASO when it was established was “to entail the American Continent’s Nations in the most fraternal friendship by means of the practice of sports.”³ Flores established an Executive Committee, which updated the statutes of the organization and took responsibility for sending a bulletin to all NOCs reporting on the activities of the institution twice a year. Avery Brundage and Juan Carlos Palacios were elected honorary members of the Executive Committee. Flores’ organization and leadership as the head of PASO arrived in concert with the tumultuous years that Brundage experienced as president of the IOC for much of the 1950s and all of 1960s.

The site of the Pan-American Games returned to South America. Other than national sport competitions, countries in the region experienced the hosting of international sporting events with increasing frequency. Argentina hosted the 1950 Men’s World Basketball Championships (the first of its kind); Brazil hosted soccer’s World Cup in that same year, as well as the Men’s Volleyball World Championships in 1960. Although soccer was already the leading spectator

¹ José de J. Clark Flores to National Olympic Committees of the Americas, April 1961, ABC, Box 205, Reel 118.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

sport in South America, the idea of hosting sporting events as a means of image enhancement on an international stage (governmental or non-governmental in nature), together with sport's potential to strengthen national sentiments and to prompt urban development, drove the interests of sport's organizations and, of course, political authorities. Because of its multi-sport character, hosting the Pan-American Games soon became an accomplishment to which cities could point when claiming the credentials for hosting the Olympic Games.

In preparations for hosting the IVth Pan-American Games, Flores and other members of PASO closely monitored São Paulo's Organizing Committee. Constraints that pervaded Argentina-U.S. relationships in the 1940s and 1950s (which interfered in the inauguration of the first Pan-American Games) differed immensely from Brazil's foreign policy in the same period, a foreign policy aligned closely with that of the United States.

However, in January 1961, Brazil-U.S. relations cooled slightly after newly elected President Jânio Quadros announced a new approach to foreign policy. Quadros sought to re-establish relations with the Socialist Bloc in the middle of the Cold War. He made overtures to Cuba. He decorated Cuban revolutionary Ernesto "Che" Guevara with Brazil's highest honor. His aggressive policy cost him the support of the Congress, partially stripping him of power. Quadros resigned on 25 August 1961. His resignation letter cited foreign and "terrible forces."⁴

João Belchior Marques Goulart was elected Quadros' successor. Before assuming the presidency of Brazil, Goulart had been known for being pro-Fidel

⁴ For more information, see: Joseph Smith, *Brazil and the United States: Convergence and Divergence* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), pp.9-243.

Castro, and procommunist. He retained Quadros' foreign policy, but, at the same time, tried to maintain close relations with the United States.⁵ While preparations for the 1963 Pan-American Games progressed, such a political environment prompted increasing unsympathetic relations between Brazil and the United States.⁶

Less than a year before the opening of São Paulo's Pan-American Games, one of the most severe events of the Cold War took place, the "missiles crisis"⁷ between Cuba, the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Relations between the U.S. and Cuba disintegrated in October 1962 when the Soviet Union began a program to use Cuba as a missile base.

The Brazilian Olympic Committee, responsible for organizing the IVth Pan-American Games, relied on PASO's president Flores' decisions on the uncertain participation of Cuban athletes. Flores did not want to exclude the Cuban team from the IVth Pan-American Games on political grounds. Although Brundage did not participate in the preparations of the 1963 Pan-American Games as directly as he had in previous editions, he intervened on major issues of concern. The Cuban case was one such instance:

This will certify your appointment as Official Representative of the International Olympic Committee at the IV Juegos Deportivos Panamericanos in Sao Paulo, Brazil this month. Don't forget that, if the Cuban athletes are all on the Government payroll because of their sport program, they cannot very well be considered amateurs for international

⁵ There is detailed information on Goulart's Government published in Portuguese. For example: Luiz Alberto Moniz Bandeira, *O governo João Goulart: as lutas sociais no Brasil 1961-1964* (Rio de Janeiro: Revan; Brasília: EdUnb, 2001), pp.11-201.

⁶ Brazil had joined Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, and Mexico in abstaining from a final vote on a resolution expelling Cuba from the Organization of American States (OAS). By the end of 1963, the U.S. downgraded its relations with Brazil and reduced aid to the country. Washington's worries were that Brazil would turn into a nonaligned emerging power. Though never admitted by the U.S. government, the U.S. secretly provided arms and other support for the military coup of 1964. U.S. government documents released on 31 March 2004, the 40th anniversary of the Brazilian coup, exposed the U.S. role. For more information, see: Smith, *Brazil and the United States*, 200-243.

⁷ See Rider, "From Resistance to Revolution," p. 74.

competition. I am leaving Dakar, Senegal for the Jeux de L'Amite, and will proceed from there to Sao Paulo.⁸

Many officials questioned the amateur status of Cuban athletes. After “fragile negotiations,”⁹ Flores cleared the status of the Cuban team, and the athletes were allowed to compete in the IVth Pan-American Games. The Cuban team appearance in Brazil aroused both curiosity and fascination for many Brazilians. According to Curtis Emery, “Public interest was strong in the red-attired Cuban squad, which thumped bongo drums and held an impromptu calypso concert in the main yard of the Pan American Village.”¹⁰ Media reports, in turn, remained vigilant of the situation between Cuba and the U.S. A report in a major Brazilian newspaper, *Folha de São Paulo*, noted on its front page:

The political divergence between Cuba and United States that separate the two countries do not prevent the athletes from the two countries to get together at the beginning of the IV Pan American Games. São Paulo is proud to stage that scene proving that sport fulfills its mission of bringing people together.¹¹

Newspaper coverage in Brazil frequently referred to the Pan-American Games as “mini-Olympics,”¹² and attached the idea of hosting international sport events to the notion of modernity. The Brazilian Olympic Committee, headed by Major Sylvio de Magalhães Padilha,¹³ obtained approximately a half million dollars from the Federal Government to organize the competitions and one million dollars from the State Government.¹⁴ Despite the financial support of the

⁸ Avery Brundage to José de J. Clark Flores, 6 April 1963, ABC, Box 205, Reel 118. Parentheses mine.

⁹ See Rider, “From Resistance to Revolution,” p. 74.

¹⁰ See Curtis Emery, “The History of the Pan-American Games,” p. 149.

¹¹ “O esporte aproxima os povos (Sport brings people together),” *Folha de São Paulo*, 27 April 1963, p.50. Translation from Portuguese is mine.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Major Padilha represented Brazil on the 1932 and 1936 track and field Olympic teams. He was the first Brazilian to qualify for the final of an athletics' Olympic event. He competed in the finals of the 400m hurdles at the Berlin Olympics.

¹⁴ João M. Casquinha Malaia Santos, “Brazil: An Emerging Power Establishing Itself in the World of International Sports Mega-events,” *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 31

governments, São Paulo was pressed to make “last-minute efforts to be ready for the Games.”¹⁵ The Pan-American Village was built on the campus of the University of São Paulo. It was the first time that participating nations were afforded the opportunity of living together away from the field of competition.

The Games opened in São Paulo on 20 April 1963. A crowd of 80,000 spectators attended the ceremonies at Pacaembu Stadium. The official ceremony followed a jet aerial performance of aerobatics and formation flying over the stadium. Trumpets accompanied the parade of athletes and officials around the stadium’s track.



Figure 15 - Opening ceremony at Pacaembu Stadium in 1963. Flag bearers stand together in front of the crowd.¹⁶

(2014): 1312-1327.

¹⁵ Emery, *The History of The Pan American Games*, p.143.

¹⁶ Photo was obtained from *Abril Editora* online database, available at: <http://vejasp.abril.com.br/materia/jogos-pan-americanos-sao-paulo/>, Accessed on 9 September 2015.

In response to Padilha's invitation, Brundage confirmed that he would attend the Games: "Since I was president of the Pan American Games Committee when it was first organized in Buenos Aires in 1940, and have attended all of the Games, I do not want to miss these."¹⁷ Brundage's presidency became a question of tradition. Although he reported positively on his general impressions of the event, Brundage pointed out some problems concerning the actions of the organizing committee:

Perhaps you did not know that at least three of the International Federations sent out letters to their members, advising them that no sanctions had been issued for the IV Juegos Deportivos Pan-americanos. The reason for this was that the Organizing Committee had not made the necessary arrangements. This meant that the National Federations could not participate. Only at the last minute were clearances obtained by the organizing Committee and this led to much uncertainty in the different countries. In the future it would be wise to have the Organizing Committee to obtain clearances from International Federations at an early date. I am sorry I could not remain for the conclusion of the IV Juegos Deportivos Panamericanos, because I had to get back to Chicago, since I must leave for my second trip to Europe this year, before the end of the month. . . . I think we can say the Games were a success and this is certainly in the large part due to your efforts as head of ODEPA.¹⁸

Writing to Padilha after the Games, Brundage complimented him on the successful staging of the Pan-American Games, as well as thanking him for the treatment he received:

I was a little disconcerted to find that my money was no good in Sao Paulo, when someone else paid for the dinner party which I arranged and ordered. I never did find out who paid for it, but I suspect you had a hand in it. In any event, it was a friendly gesture and I wish you would thank whoever it was that made the payment. I left with many pleasant memories of my brief visit in your country.¹⁹

However, more pressing issues concerned Brundage. He observed:

¹⁷ Avery Brundage to Sylvio Magalhães Padilha, 13 May, 19663, ABC, Box 205, Reel 118.

¹⁸ Avery Brundage to José de J. Clark Flores, 20 May 1963, ABC, Box 205, Reel 118.

Parentheses mine.

¹⁹ Avery Brundage to Sylvio de Magalhães Padilha, 20 May 1963, ABC, Box 205, Reel 118.

The unbalanced nature of the Pan American Games, with the United States having almost a monopoly on the medals, disturbs me, but I do not know what to do about it. Perhaps you have some ideas.²⁰

In fact, this was a subject of debate when Brundage first discussed the idea of a competition between the Americas (see Chapter 2). His apprehensions seem to have dissipated for a time when Argentinean athletes dominated the medal count at the first Pan-American Games. At that time he reported:

Still another fallacy spread by Olympic critics is that the United States creates ill through its near-monopoly of victories. Our superior manpower, technique and equipment are popularly supposed to aggravate many small but politically important countries which are outclassed. Quite opposite is true. . . . The progress that has been made in sport in Latin American countries in the last generation was clearly demonstrated. Our team had a friendly and hospitable reception, but those who thought we would dominate the events were hardly mistaken. Considering the short time in which the Games were organized they were a great success. The next ones are scheduled for Mexico City 1955.²¹

However, a closer look at the report of the general manager of the U.S. first Pan-American team gives indication that when attending the first event in Buenos Aires, the U.S. team did not enter its best competitors because “the time of the year tied up many of our best athletes, thus handicapping or preventing tryouts.”²² In the second edition of the Pan-American Games, the U.S. dominated the medal counts, followed by Argentina. In 1959 the U.S. team’s dominance in the events became firmly established. It was the first time, according to the USOC’s report, that the U.S. selected its team in a manner similar to that used in determining Olympic entries. Although “the United States had been expected to dominate the Third Pan American Games at Chicago

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Avery Brundage, “Report of the President,” in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, p. 25-27.

²² J. Lyman Bingham, “Report of the General Manager,” in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book*, p. 329.

1959,”²³ the degree of superiority revealed throughout the 12-day international sports festival was even more “overwhelming”²⁴ than expected. However, it is important to notice that in Chicago “South American nations were handicapped by competing in what was their ‘off’ season.”²⁵ As for 1963, Curtis Emery’s analysis of the competition results point out that “although the United States dominated the Chicago Games, the 1963 competition at São Paulo was closer, and more nations shared the medal distribution than in any other Pan American celebration.”²⁶ Finding balance was critical but difficult. Over the course of time, the Games often conflicted with preparations for other international competitions. Consequently, many sport federations, mainly from the U.S. and Canada, sent “B” teams to the Pan-American Games.

A main feature and innovation of the IVth Pan-American Games was the showing each night of motion pictures of the athletes in competition on the previous day. A modern theater provided musicals. Other performances were staged for the visiting delegations. The size of the crowds attending the opening and closing ceremonies far surpassed those of previous Games.²⁷ On 5 May 1963 the closing ceremony was held in Pacaembu stadium before some 75 thousand people. By then, Winnipeg, Canada had won the right to host the Vth Pan-American Games in 1967.

²³ United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1960 Olympic Book: quadrennial report*, 1961, p.226.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., p.320.

²⁶ Curtis Emery, “The History of the Pan-American Games,” p. 162.

²⁷ Ibid.

1967 Winnipeg

Brundage's attendance at the subsequent Pan-American Games in Winnipeg and Cali is barely documented in the Avery Brundage Collection. In the 1960s Brundage faced accelerating opposition within the International Olympic Committee. Battles over apartheid in Africa; continuing conflicts with commercialism, especially in the Winter Olympic Games; his fight to maintain the Olympic's identity in the midst of the Cold War; increasing encroachments on his cherished ideal of strict amateurism; each of these and more diminished time and energy for matters relating to the Pan-American Games. He won reelection in 1968 only with considerable difficulty. His supporters insisted he had done much to keep the Olympic Games free of politics, whereas his critics accused him of obstinacy, prejudice, insensitivity, and his personal persona of "my way or the high highway."²⁸

One year before the 1968 IOC elections, the Vth Pan-American Games occurred. Brundage kept newspaper clippings related to the forthcoming Winnipeg Pan-American Games, as well as posters, a copy of the sports program, and copies of the reports on preparations for the Games (often sent to him by Flores). Brundage also exchanged limited correspondence with sport authorities in Canada. And, he attended the Games.

Regarding the political context, Canada embraced a close relationship with the United States during WWII, one which extended throughout the Cold War. Thus, the political environment was stable and it reflected positively on the preparations of the Games. However, as in all the other editions of the event,

²⁸ Seen, *Power, Politics, and the Olympic Games*, p.142.

there were some concerns. In February 1965, Brundage wrote to Andrew Sydney Dawes, Canadian member of the IOC, to find information regarding the preparations of the 1967 Pan-Am:

It has been brought to my attention that there are some difficulties in connection with the Panamerican Games which are scheduled for Winnipeg in 1967. Can you find out what is going on and what the prospectus is? If there are troubles there it will, as you know, undoubtedly affect the chances of Calgary for the Winter Games.²⁹ Do you think I should write to the Canadian Olympic Committee? I have heard conflicting reports on the Canadian Government activities in sport and physical training. Someone told me that they were working through the established amateur organizations and getting very good results, and (but) from another source I heard the National Federation and Olympic Committee were not very happy about developments.³⁰

Allan M. McGavin, member of the Canadian Olympic Association (COAC), now the Canadian Olympic Committee, and Chairman of the Pan-American Games Committee established by the COAC, responded:

I was talking with Sidney Dawes the other day, who told me you are concerned about Winnipeg and the '67 Pan American Games. I, too, have been a bit concerned about them. . . . I am sure the talk you have been hearing is the ordinary talk that goes on before any games and mostly it is stimulated by reporters who have little to write about. The City of Winnipeg and the Province have been negotiating with the Federal Government for support and that support is now assured. The Games will go ahead and I am sure they will be held to your complete satisfaction. . . . General Clark was, of course, also concerned because the rumours had reached Mexico. . . . So far as I can see, there is no need to worry about the Games in Winnipeg. They are organized and everything should go forward as planned.³¹

The Vth Pan-American Games counted on Federal, Provincial and Civic financial support. The government of Canada provided CAD\$ 2,560,308, and the city of Winnipeg CAD\$ 1,270,309.³² The Winnipeg Organizing Committee

²⁹ Calgary had bid for the 1968 Winter Olympics. The bid was not successful but there were aspirations to bid for future Winter Games.

³⁰ Avery Brundage to Sydney Dawes, 25 February 1965, ABC, Box 205, Reel 119. Parentheses mine.

³¹ Allan M. McGavin to Avery Brundage, 15 March 1965, ABC, Box 205, Reel 119. Parentheses mine.

³² Winnipeg Organizing Committee, *Fifth Pan-American Games, July 22-August 7, 1967*

was formed autonomously from the COAC. The two organizations each elected its own committee to work on the Pan-American Games. James Worrall, president of the COAC, stated:

True, the Pan American games were an important part of Canada's centennial celebration, but they stand upon their own merits as one of the greatest of all athletic achievements in Canadian history. The Canadian Olympic Association is legally and technically the parent of any Organizing Committee, but the Association is pleased to delegate all the credit to those people in Winnipeg who made this great success possible.³³

In fact, the organizing committee was determined to prepare the Games complying with all regulations. James Daly, Executive Director of the Winnipeg Organizing Committee, consulted with Flores and Brundage "for information on the protocol and proper procedures for the opening and closing ceremonies and award presentations at Pan-American Games."³⁴ On 18 May 1966 Brundage sent him "an updated copy of the Olympic 'Bible'."³⁵

The Games opened on 23 July 1967. Athletes from 29 countries participated. Prior to the opening, the torch relay "took on added excitement as 15 native Canadians, representing various Indian tribes, were chosen to run."³⁶ Under a heavy rain, the athletes slogged into the stadium for the opening ceremony. The rain damaged the musical instruments of the assembled bands, drenched the musicians, and saturated their uniforms. England Prince Philip attended the ceremony and, as rain continued to fall heavily, he officially opened the Games: "On behalf of the Queen, who sends her greetings, I have

(Winnipeg: MacFarlane Communication Services, 1969).

³³ James Worrall, "Message from the President of the Canadian Olympic Association," in *Canada at the 5th Pan American Games 1967*, Pan American Games Committee of Canada, 1967.

³⁴ James Daly to Avery Brundage, 11 May 1966, ABC, Box 205, Reel 119.

³⁵ Avery Brundage to James Daly, 18 May 1966, ABC, Box 205, Reel 119.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.34.

the honour to declare the 5th Pan-American Games open.”³⁷



Figure 16 - Prince Philip at the opening ceremonies in Winnipeg



Figure 17 - Prince Philips on stage moments before declaring the IVth Pan-American Games officially opened.³⁸

³⁷ Ibid., p.35

³⁸ Pictures were found in the Winnipeg Organizing Committee, *V Pan-American Games*



Figure 18 – The Canadian Pan-American Games symbol was designed by W. J. Mayrs, who won a contest promoted by the Winnipeg Organizing Committee. It represents a stylized athlete in track shirt displaying Canada’s maple leaf. The athlete had his arms outflung as a welcome to Canada, a visual registration to all non-English speaking people. The sentence “The Olympics of the Western Hemisphere” seem to have ignored previous attempts to protect the word Olympics from being used in different sport festivals.³⁹

There is an almost total silence in scholarly work dedicated towards analyzing the 1967 Pan-American Games in Winnipeg, but important clues found in the official report of the Games establishes precedent to later analysis relating to the host of international sporting events in Canada and the quest for national identity:

Winnipeg Canada, pp.10-11.

³⁹ The image’s description was based on the information published in the official report of the 1967 Winnipeg Organizing Committee. The image was obtained from: “The Spirit of Friendship Through Sports: Poster Images from the Pan-American Games, 1951-1999,” copyright of the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles, 1999 and LA84 Foundation, 2007. LA84 foundation website, <http://www.la84.org/the-spirit-of-friendship-through-sports-poster-images-from-the-pan-american-games-1951-1999>. Accessed on 20 August 2015.

The response of the Canadian community to the challenge of the Pan-American Games can be compared to this measure of a great country, and the way this was made is now an integral part of Canada's history. In 1967, our centennial year, when the search for a "national identity" was occupying the minds of many Canadians, the citizens of Manitoba demonstrated their identity.⁴⁰

One might notice that the context of much analysis exploring the experiences of Canadian cities in hosting sporting events usually presents, as starting points, the perspective of globalization within the Olympic Movement in the 1960s and the hosting of global events in Canada such as Expo'67 and, later, the 1976 Olympic Games.⁴¹ This study suggests an earlier precedent to the implication of forging national identities through the platform of international sporting events in Canada. This notion deserves further research.

Brundage exchanged cordial letters with the Chairman of the Winnipeg Organizing Committee, W. Culver Riley, who sent him a copy of "the official history of the Fifth Pan American Games."⁴² Riley added: "This should put you in mind of the day you and I sat in the rain together at the Opening."⁴³ Brundage reported to his IOC colleagues that members of the Winnipeg Organizing Committee deserved "great credit for the manner in which they staged the Panamerican Games."⁴⁴ To James Daly Brundage wrote that he regretted "the disastrous cloudburst at the Opening Ceremony," but added that "Winnipeg, and in fact all Canada, can be proud of your organization."⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Ibid., p.32.

⁴¹ As an example, see: David Whitson, "Olympic Hosting in Canada: promotional Ambitions, Political Challenges," *OLYMPIKA: International Journal of Olympic Studies* 14 (2005): 29-46.

⁴² W. Culver Riley, Chairman of the Winnipeg Organizing Committee, to Avery Brundage, 9 September 1969, ABC, Box 205, Reel 118.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Avery Brundage to Johann W. Westerhof, Secretary General of the IOC, 8 April 1968, ABC, Box 205, Reel 118.

⁴⁵ Avery Brundage to James Daly, Executive Director of the Winnipeg Organizing Committee, 30 August 1967, ABC, Box 205, Reel 118.

Though Brundage's connection to PASO was not as close as it had been in the 1940s and 1950s, James Daly wrote to thank him "for the opportunity of organizing the 5th Pan-American Games, and we hope our efforts have helped to strengthen the bonds of 'The American Spirit of Friendship through Sport'."⁴⁶ Daly's message to Brundage was obviously directed to the IOC president, not simply to the honorary member of PASO's Executive Committee:

All of Canada was involved in the success of these Games, and I believe I can speak for Canada in saying that we are now ready and willing to accept the challenge of staging more and greater international summer and winter Games.⁴⁷

Shortly after the Games were over the IOC honored the organizing committee of the Vth Pan-American Games with the Olympic Cup, awarded to an "institution or association with a general reputation for merit and integrity which has been active and efficient in the service of amateur sport and has contributed substantially to the development of the Olympic Movement."⁴⁸

1971 Cali

Santiago de Cali, Colombia undertook the task of hosting the VIth Pan-American Games in 1971, the third edition of them hosted in South America. The Colombian Olympic Committee was one of the most recent South American NOCs to be formed. It was not recognized by the IOC until 1948.⁴⁹ Although a sole Colombian athlete took part in the celebration of the 1932 Olympic Games, a Colombian NOC was envisioned and tentatively formed in 1936. Julio Gerlein Comelin, the president of the Colombian NOC during its first

⁴⁶ James Daly to Avery Brundage, 22 August 1967, ABC, Box 205, Reel 118.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Winnipeg Organizing Committee, Fifth Pan-American Games, p.95.

⁴⁹ Colombia and Olympism, *Olympic Review*, no.158, December 1980, pp.711-716.

years, was the first Colombian member co-opted into the IOC. This occurred in 1952. However, the hosting of international sport competitions was already part of Colombia's sport culture. Colombia held the first Bolivarian Games in Bogota in 1938, as well as the Vth Central American and Caribbean Games and the IVth Bolivarian Games, each held at Barranquilla in 1946 and 1961, respectively.⁵⁰

A sociological analysis of Cali's urban development related to the 1971 Pan-American Games examined the implications of the event to the social representation of Cali as a "sports city."⁵¹ The Pan-American Games were framed by the Camilo Mayor as being the height of the city's golden age, "a model of civic orderliness."⁵² In other words, the Games contributed to Cali's reputation as Colombia's sport capital. The *Estadio Olimpico Pascual Guerrero*, built in the 1930s, was restructured and adapted to Olympic standards of the time. As well, several new facilities were built.

In regard to Colombia's political context, like other presidents in South America at the time, Misael Pastrana Borrero (Colombian President from 1970 to 1974) claimed to pursue a foreign policy more independent of the United States. Borrero had been the Colombian ambassador in Washington, D.C. from 1968-1969. He was known as a conservative and cautiously progressive politician. The archives gathered for this study do not reflect much of the political context of Colombia in the preparations for the VIth Pan-American Games. Reporting on PASO's activities to Avery Brundage on 18 November 1969, Flores ensured that the "organizing committee of the 6th Pan-American

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ The article was published in Spanish in a Brazilian sport history journal. See Camilo Adolfo Mayor, "En Cali, Capital Deportiva de América, Nadie Sabe Qué es el Hockey: Estudio de una Imagen Urbana a Propósito de Los VI Juegos Panamericanos," *Recorde: Revista de História do Esporte* 4 (2011): 1-36.

⁵² Ibid., p. 6. Translation is mine.

Games has duly studied the IOC rules with regard to Regional Games.”⁵³ He stated:

Through the constant supervision and study of the plans and work of the organizing committee of the 6th Pan-American Games, the Pan-American Sports Organization has acquired certainty that the Olympic rules and principles will be strictly observed during the 6th Pan-American Games.⁵⁴

Flores’ effort to make NOCs and Organizing committees comply with the Olympic rules was an initiative that had to be continually reinforced. On 13 April 1971 José de J. Clark Flores wrote to the members of PASO’s Executive Board:

Because of poor health and in spite of all my efforts to continue in the high position to which I was elected, as well as to postpone to the very last moment my retirement, I am now forced to ask you for and undetermined leave of absence from my duties as President of this Pan American Sports Organization. . . . Once more I wish to say that holding the position of President of this Organization has been a source of satisfaction to me. . . . In thanking you – and through you the officials of all the National Olympic Committees affiliated with PASO – for the friendly and total support I was always given, it only remains for me to urge you to continue your incessant efforts to keep and increase the sports unity of our dear Continent. This unity has yielded magnificent results, and is the main reason why the Pan American Games are now regarded as the most important sports event next to the Olympics. May we never lose sight of our aim: the promotion of total implementation in America of the lofty ideals of the Olympic Movement.⁵⁵

Flores died five days later in the early morning of 18 April 1971. According to his biographer, he was diagnosed with bladder cancer in 1969 but kept it a secret from family and friends.⁵⁶ Following PASO’s statute, Brazilian Sylvio Padilha became the acting president. He stated that he was committed “to continue

⁵³ José de Jesus Clark Flores to Avery Brundage, 18 November 1969, ABC, Box 206, Reel 119.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ José de Jesus Clark Flores to the Members of the Executive Board of the Pan American Sport Organization, 13 April 1971, ABC, Box 206, Reel 119.

⁵⁶ Carmona, *Biography of Jose de Jesus Clark Flores: Man of Honor*, p.142.

furthering and upholding the Olympic ideal and Movement in the American Continent.”⁵⁷ Writing to Padilha, Brundage said:

We are all sad about the passing of General Clark which is a great loss to the Olympic Movement, and especially to the ODEPA. . . . I am trying to arrange my affairs to be able to attend the Games in Cali. There have been some rumors that all was not going well with the preparations – and perhaps you should visit Cali at an early date to look over the facilities and organization.⁵⁸

Brundage “wholeheartedly”⁵⁹ supported Padilha in assuming “emergency leadership” of PASO at a time when preparations for the Games were well advanced. In the annual meeting of PASO’s Executive Board held from 17 to 19 August 1970, Flores had acknowledged Cali’s excellent location and highlighted the “great athletic and Olympic tradition”⁶⁰ existing in the city. Additionally, PASO’s officials noticed:

The Government has initiated many urban works of great importance which, together with the sport installations, represent the most important material heritage of these continental athletic competitions. These factors, added to the hospitality of Colombian people, constitute a promise of a large attendance of both NOCs and participants to the VI Pan American Games.⁶¹

The VIth Pan-American Games opened on 31 July 1971. 60,000 people attended the ceremony. According to the USOC’s report on the event, 4,150 athletes competed, a record for Pan-American competition.⁶²

⁵⁷ Sylvio de Magalhaes Padilha to Avery Brundage, 27 April 1971, ABC, Box 206, Reel 119.

⁵⁸ Avery Brundage to Sylvio de Magalhaes Padilha, 18 May 1971, ABC, Box 206,

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Minutes of the annual meeting of the Executive Board of the Pan American Sports Organization held on 17-19 August 1971 in Cali, Colombia, ABC, Box 206, Reel 119.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² United States Olympic Committee, 1972 *United States Olympic Book*, 274.



Figure 19 - Opening Ceremonies in Cali's Estadio Olímpico Pascual Guerrero.⁶³

The Games unfolded with few negative incidents. However, students protesting the amount of money that Colombia was spending on the games, prompted authorities to station armed guards around the athletes' village.⁶⁴ Media coverage of the event indicated that athletes complained about “mosquitoes, the altitude, faulty plumbing, dysentery and pickpockets.”⁶⁵ Also targeted with criticism were the overcrowded barracks-style housing for the delegations.

⁶³ I found this picture in a digital repository of Iain Ritchie, Brazilian shooter marksman who competed in the 1971 Pan-American Games. Ritchie said that he was excused from participating in the opening ceremonies because he had to compete on the next day. He attended the ceremonies, but as a spectator, he took this picture. Available at: https://www.flickr.com/photos/iain_ritchie/7033500763/. Accessed on 16 September 2015.

⁶⁴ “The Pan-Am Games,” *Time Magazine* 98, no. 7, August 16, 1971, p. 50. Available from: Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost. Accessed 14 September 2015.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Brundage's continuous concern with the U.S. team's dominance of the competitions were noted by the press:

Since their inception in 1951, the quadrennial Pan-American Games have served as a kind of Olympic warmup session for strong U.S. teams. American athletes have so dominated the Pan-Am Games, in fact, that International Olympic Committee President Avery Brundage began to wonder whether they might be too good for their own good. Shortly before the opening of the sixth Pan-Am Games in Cali, Colombia, the 83-year-old Brundage observed: 'It doesn't look good for the U.S. to be collaring three-quarters of the Pan-Am medals. It's not good for sports, the games or the U.S. There has to be some resentment by the other countries.' ⁶⁶

However, in Cali, there were some unexpected results.

Biggest Shocker. Avery need not have worried. The games had barely begun when it became apparent last week that the U.S. team was perhaps facing its toughest competition ever. The first surprise came in rowing, an event in which the U.S. copped six of seven first-place medals in the 1967 games. All but scuttled by crack crews from Argentina and Brazil, the U.S. oarsmen were unable to pull to a single victory. . . . The biggest shocker of all, though, happened in basketball, a sport in which the U.S. is supposedly invincible. Before a chanting, cheering crowd, the hustling, well-drilled Cubans defeated a team of U.S. college stars 73-69. In an attempt to explain away the embarrassing losses, some members of the U.S. delegation said that the Cuban team had been training for the games for at least four years under the guidance of Russian coaches. "It's obvious," said one U.S. official, "that the Communists are using Cuba as a propaganda vehicle." ⁶⁷

Apparently, Brundage made a suggestion to change the selection of the U.S. team for future Pan-American Games. A letter from a Brundage critic named K. L. Dollarhide, ⁶⁸ reads:

I only write to express my complete disagreement with your views on the United States domination of the Pan American Games. You can be sure your statements will be poorly received by the majority of U.S citizens living abroad. The American tradition is to win. Your idea on this subject is completely alien to our way of life. Do you really believe that Latin America will respect us more if we only win a half dozen gold medals at the Games in Cali? Your thinking follows the misguided concepts of U.S. foreign policy. There are those in high places that believe by showering money on nations (138 billion dollars since 1945), we will win their affection and support on the world scene. Nothing can

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ I could not identify who Dollarhide was.

be further from the truth. . . . What you are actually suggesting of course is that we do not send top athletes to these Games. Do you recommend a selectivity in reverse? For example if an athlete is in the top 10 performers in the U.S he would automatically disqualify himself for the Pan American Games. Would it not be better to completely withdraw from participation? I would like to relate your statements to the loss of our basket-ball team to Cuba, but somehow words fail me.⁶⁹

Responding to Dollarhide, Brundage clarified that his suggestion was not to send “second-class material”⁷⁰ to the Pan-American Games, but to send fewer athletes to each event. Despite some disagreement, Brundage was quite right about the American’s dominance of the event (see Chart 2 below).

Chart 2 - All-time medal placings Pan-American Games 1951-1971⁷¹

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	United States	587	348	225	1,160
2	Argentina	124	139	108	371
3	Canada	52	111	137	300
4	Mexico	42	64	134	240
5	Cuba	54	91	78	223
6	Brazil	49	65	66	180
7	Chile	22	34	43	

One year after Cali’s Pan-American Games, Brundage’s speech at the IOC session in Luxemburg offered a positive assessment of the event and of Regional Games in general. He stated:

One of the new sport facilities constructed was dedicated and named in honour of our late Vice-President, General José de Clark Flores, who had

⁶⁹ K. L. Dollarhide to Avery Brundage, 3 August 1971, ABC, Box 206, Reel 119.

⁷⁰ Avery Brundage to K. L. Dollarhide, 11 August 1971, ABC, Box 206, Reel 119.

⁷¹ Information on this chart was based on the USOC’s report of the VIth Pan-American Games. See United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1972 Olympic Book: quadrennial report* (New York City: Frederick Fliegner, 1972), p.274.

been President of the Pan American Sports Organization. More than 4,000 competitors appeared - a new record - and 30 of the 33 member National Olympic Committees were represented... more teams than ever before won medals - an indication of the improvement in performance. Public interest was high and there must have been at least half a million people lining the streets just to watch the passage of the sacred Flame. . . . These and other regional and national games, like the Olympic Games, are becoming more and more popular and successful. One cannot go anywhere in the world without finding interest in and enthusiasm for the Olympic Movement and respect for the International Olympic Committee which has patronized these games and kept them clean, pure and honest.⁷²

Brundage's last moments as the head of the IOC were hectic. The 1972 Olympic Games were tragically shattered by terrorists in Munich. In April 1975, at age 85, Brundage entered the hospital at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, site of the 1936 Olympic Winter Games, where he had purchased a home. He suffered from the flu. Brundage did not live to see the VIIth Pan-American Games (staged again in Mexico City in October 1975). On 8 May 1975, Brundage died of heart failure.⁷³ The idea and realization of the Pan-American Games entered the post-Brundage era as the second largest multi-sport event in the world.

⁷² Speech by Avery Brundage, president of the International Olympic Committee, IOC Session, Luxembourg City, 1971, *Olympic Review*, no. 49, October, 1971. Available at: <http://library.la84.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview/1971/ore49/ore49g.pdf>. Accessed on 20 July 2015.

⁷³ Guttman, *The Games Must Go On*, pp.259-261.

Chapter 6

Summary, Conclusions, and Future Research

Summary

The 1930s marked the beginning of Brundage's interactions with the idea of hosting Pan-American Games. Communicating with Alexander Hogarty was critical for Brundage's early understanding of sport context in Latin America. Hogarty, who served as athletics coach in several Latin American countries, proposed to host the first Pan-American Games in Havana, while furnishing Brundage with his own impressions of the region's sport culture and development. At that point, joining Hogarty in seeking support from the U.S. government, Brundage embraced and echoed the diplomatic factors that arose as the primary goals for the realization of the continental Games. Such goals were based on the U.S. Good Neighbour policy, which was aimed at improving Inter-American relations. However, I argued that Brundage's trip throughout South America in 1940 changed his perspectives on the proposed Games. He gradually injected idealistic messages related to his views of sports, amateurism, and the Modern Olympic Movement into the purpose of establishing the Games, building what proved to be an important network with Latin American sport leaders.

Importantly, the establishment and bureaucratization of the Pan-American Sports Organization in 1940, with Brundage as its first elected president, sealed the plans to host Pan-American Games. The outbreak of

World War II forced the Pan-American Games to be postponed year after year following a failed attempt to host the Games in Buenos Aires in 1942.

From 1943 to 1948 Brundage maintained the lines of communication with members of PASO, preserving interest in the project during the ravages of World War II. As demonstrated, Brundage also nurtured the link between the Olympic Games and the Pan-American Games, primarily focusing on the hegemony of the Olympics over the Pan-American festival. During the IInd Pan-American Sports Congress held in London 1948, Brundage was re-elected as the president of the Pan-American Sports Organization. The Pan-American Games finally materialized in 1951. At the time, organized sport in many Latin American countries existed under the aegis of governments. Brundage questioned Latin American governments relative to their intervention in national sport organizations.

Brundage exhibited numerous concerns related to the first Pan-American Games in Buenos Aires, he ignored the influence of the Peronist government in the preparations, and realization of them. In general, Brundage termed the first Pan-American Games a success and came away with raised expectations for the continuity of the event.

Brundage's duties as president of the IOC compromised his involvement with PASO in preparations for the second Pan-American Games to be held in Mexico City in 1955. A new set of IOC rules for patronizing regional games deconstructed PASO's initial quest for autonomy. Findings suggest that José de Jesús Clark Flores, an experienced Mexican sport leader, was an important figure for securing the success of the second edition of the Pan-American Games in Mexico City, and later, for putting the Pan-American Games on a

sound footing after the Cleveland-Chicago struggle for hosting the 1959 Games. Flores' success, I argued, related to his vast experience as a sport leader and the convergence of his ideals with Brundage's.

Brundage attended every subsequent Pan-American Games until his death in 1975. He was always concerned with the application of IOC rules. He worried about the supremacy of the U.S. athletic performance in comparison with other Latin American countries. All the editions of the Pan-American Games were patterned after the Olympic Games, its ceremonies, its protocols, etc. In general, the continental event, like the Olympics, often became a platform for political displays and disputes.

Conclusions and Future Research

The few previous scholarly works on the Pan-American Games examined isolated events or concentrated on competition results. Only two particular analyses addressed Brundage's involvement in the founding of the Pan-American Games. Neither examined the influence of Brundage's sports view in the development of the Pan-American idea.⁷⁴ In effect, no previous work has explored seminal materials covering the formation, inauguration, and the early years of the Pan-American Games. The archives from the Avery Brundage Collection covering the time period selected for this study provided an empirical perspective on the development of the Pan-American idea and its materialization.

⁷⁴ The two analyses were: Mengjia Zhang, "Avery Brundage and the Founding of the Pan-American Games" (Master's Major Paper, Western University, 2011); and Cesar R. Torres, "The limits of Pan-Americanism: the case of the failed 1942 Pan-American Games," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28 (2011): 2547-2574.

In sum, two arguments related to the purpose and function of the Pan-American Games in its formative years stood out in the data analysis: the diplomatic role of the Games towards enhancing Inter-American relationships; and the idealistic view later implicated in the event aimed at fostering the 'high ideals' of the Modern Olympic Movement. Based on the evidence examined in this study, I argued that Avery Brundage's beliefs and perspective on sports, amateurism, and the Olympic Movement directly influenced the formation and development of the Pan-American Games. It was demonstrated that the evolution of diplomatic or ideological arguments to emphasize the importance of the Pan-American idea oscillated according to the circumstances. For example, when Brundage travelled throughout South America, or corresponded with Latin American officials, he professed the beneficial ideals of amateur sports and the Olympic Games, emphasizing the importance of abiding by the rules and regulations of the International Olympic Committee. On the other hand, whenever the realization of the Pan-American Games was threatened by the lack of support from governments and/or action of organizing committees, Brundage appealed to the diplomatic argument claiming that if the Games did not occur, the countries of the Americas would miss an unique opportunity to strengthen Pan-American relations.

Indelibly, Brundage at times resorted to the idealistic argument when it served his purpose. In 1952, with but one Pan-American Games celebrated, he asked: "Why should we go to all this trouble and expense to participate in the Olympic Games and collateral events like the Pan American Games?"⁷⁵ Considering his position and outspoken beliefs, his answer was obvious and

⁷⁵ Avery Brundage, "Report of the President," in United States Olympic Committee, *United States 1952 Olympic Book: Quadrennial Report*, 1953, p.29.

revealing: “The Olympic Movement is a great idealistic enterprise.”⁷⁶ First, naming the Pan-American Games as a “collateral” event put them in perspective. Secondly, Brundage did not propose a purpose for the continental Games themselves. Instead, as demonstrated throughout this study, he unequivocally etched the hierarchical difference between the two events, the Pan-American Games served the Olympic Games.

A crucial finding from this investigation is how Brundage articulated the foundation of the Pan-American Games by veiling his actions and attitudes from imperialist connotations. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Brundage’s leadership roles certainly entrusted to him a high degree of authority to convey the messages related to his view of sports, amateurism, and the Olympic Movement, thus, driving Latin Americans to accept them. He skillfully managed to build a trustful and solid networking system with Latin American sport leaders, agreeing with the idea of creating a new and autonomous institution (PASO). However, gradually, Brundage put forward the interests of the IOC, or to be more accurate, his view of sports, the Olympic Movement, and its purposes.

Brundage fought hard against the “evils”⁷⁷ created by the interference of politics in sport matters. However, it was almost certain that he complacently ignored the showcasing of the Pan-American Games by Peronist New Argentina in the inaugural event. Was he forgiving the “ignorance”⁷⁸ of sport leaders in Latin America? Scholars interested in Olympic Studies might well be familiar with precedents proving that it was preferable for Brundage to keep the

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ See Chapter 2.

⁷⁸ See Chapter 3.

Games functioning while dealing with eventual unfavorable political circumstances. Considering the respective proportions, one key event found in the vast literature documenting Brundage's career might serve as an example of that: his defense of the Berlin games against the threat of boycott in 1936 in spite of the well-known implication on them of the Nazi regime. In the context of the Pan-American Games, this study provided evidence that Brundage acknowledged the interference of Governments in sport events in the Americas.

A scene that could never be enacted at the Olympic Games took place recently in Latin America. At a regional games [I saw] a gaudily uniformed candidate for re-election stride to the podium,⁷⁹ seize the microphone and deliver a half-hour political harangue. Officials shrugged. 'We are helpless,' they said.⁸⁰

However, there are indications that he hoped for a specific "political" attitude. Expressing his view on a "political attitude," Brundage recalled a scene he had witnessed at the Bolivarian Games in Venezuela, celebrated shortly after the inaugural Pan-American Games in 1951:

At Caracas, Venezuela, I was given a better demonstration of the Olympic Spirit. In a section of the world where government subsidies are required for events of this kind and where, consequently, political control is expected, the conduct of the Games was left entirely to sport leaders. Everything was carried out according to the best amateur sport traditions. Later, at a palace reception, I congratulated the President of Venezuela on the freedom of the games from political interference. 'Ah,' he said smiling, 'but that is the best politics.' Many countries might well copy that enlightened attitude.⁸¹

Brundage directly linked the occurrence of the Pan-American Games with the progress of sport in Latin American countries. While, for some IOC members in the 1940s and 1950s, regional Games could have a negative effect on the Olympic Movement, Brundage saw in the Pan-American Games not only a

⁷⁹ Based on this statement, I assume that this event to which Brundage referred took place in the 1950 Central American Games in Guatemala.

⁸⁰ Avery Brundage, *The Olympic Story*, in United States Olympic Committee, United States 1952 Olympic Book, p. 25.

⁸¹ Ibid.

challenge, but an opportunity to promote the Modern Olympic Movement's rules and ideals throughout Latin America. As demonstrated in this work, Latin American sport leaders embraced the Pan-American idea, paradoxically seeking to reconcile their respective political interests with the proposed apolitical Pan-American Games. Important to the development of sport in Latin America is the fact that, although led by Americans in its first 19 years, the Pan-American Sports Organization represented one of the first opportunities for Latin American sport leaders to experience the leadership of international multi-sport organizations.

Though Brundage's immediate successor as PASO leader, Douglas F. Roby, faced the challenge of ensuring that the Pan-American Games survived the Cleveland-Chicago problematic, I argue, that it was PASO's third president, José de J. Clark Flores, who cemented the Pan-American "mission" as Brundage envisioned it.⁸² First, Flores was greatly responsible for the success of the second event in Mexico, and later, at the helm of PASO, he worked steadfastly to establish a solid structure for the organization, update its statutes, and improve in communication between PASO and the NOCs of the Latin American countries. Besides, Flores urged Latin American countries to comply with the Modern Olympic Movement's rules while committing PASO to foster Olympic ideals in the Americas.

Future investigations on the Pan-American Games might consider exploring archival sources from the IOC, PASO's headquarters in Mexico City, Latin American NOCs and/or other possible existing collections holding documents of sport leaders who directed the Pan-American Sport Organization

⁸² See Chapter 2.

in the following years, including: José de Jesus Clark Flores (1959-1971); José Beracasa, Venezuela (1971-1975); Mario Vásquez Raña, Mexico (1975-2015); Ivar Sisniega, Mexico, (Interim President in 2015); and Júlio Cesar Maglione, Uruguay (current President). Such archives may offer a perspective for examining not only each president's approach, contributions and challenges as the heads of the continental organization, but to problematize further political and organizational relations between the IOC and PASO in order to investigate the questions of autonomy, aroused tensions, and other factors. Of course, the cultural and political context of subsequent events represent considerable possibilities for the analysis of sport in the Americas.

Furthermore, while the Olympic Games and the IOC have increasingly come before media and scholarly attention due to corruption scandals linked to misconducts of IOC members in the bidding process and other unsavory episodes, PASO's activities, including the selection of host cities and finances, for example, remain less publicized and less examined. While cities in the Western Hemisphere continue to host the Pan-American Games with some expectation on the part of sport officials to demonstrate the capacity of a nation to host Olympic Games in the future, it seems important to pay a closer attention to the implications that surround the continental event.⁸³

All sport organizations become embedded with their own unique cultural considerations, even when they are connected to larger organizations. The role of history in preserving the memories of such institutions should be understood

⁸³ Successfully hosting Pan-American Games have been used by media, NOCs, and governments as credentials to promote a city's candidature to host the Olympics. See, for example, the case of Rio's Pan-American Games in 2007 and the city's subsequent candidature to host the 2016 Olympics as analyzed by Guilherme Ferreira Santos and Rafael Júnio Andrade Alves, "O Discurso Midiático Dos Jogos Pan-Americanos Rio/2007 e a Candidatura aos Jogos Olímpicos de 2016: O 'Trampolim' do Brasil," *Coleção Pesquisa em Educação Física* 8 (2009): 155-162.

with regard to examining aims, questioning cohesion, and interpreting significance.

Finally, taking a step further, comparative historical analysis between regional Games from different parts of the world might offer the possibility of drawing contrasts and/or similarities between aspects of sports cultures and their organizational structures in a globalized world where the changes, tensions and conciliation between local and global affairs represent a challenge for interpreting different societies and their relationships with sports.

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